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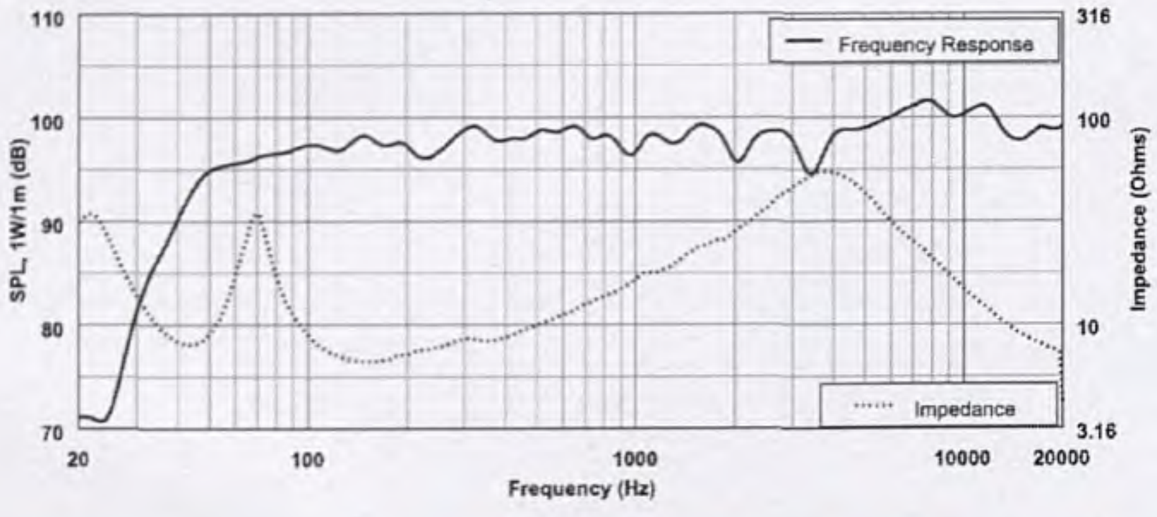

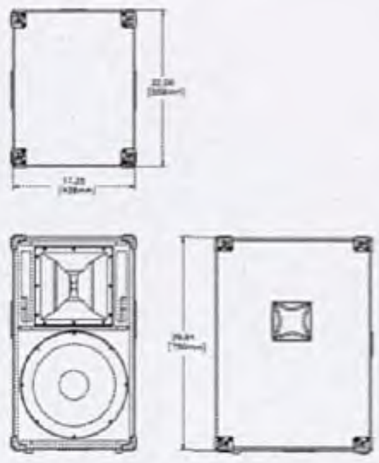

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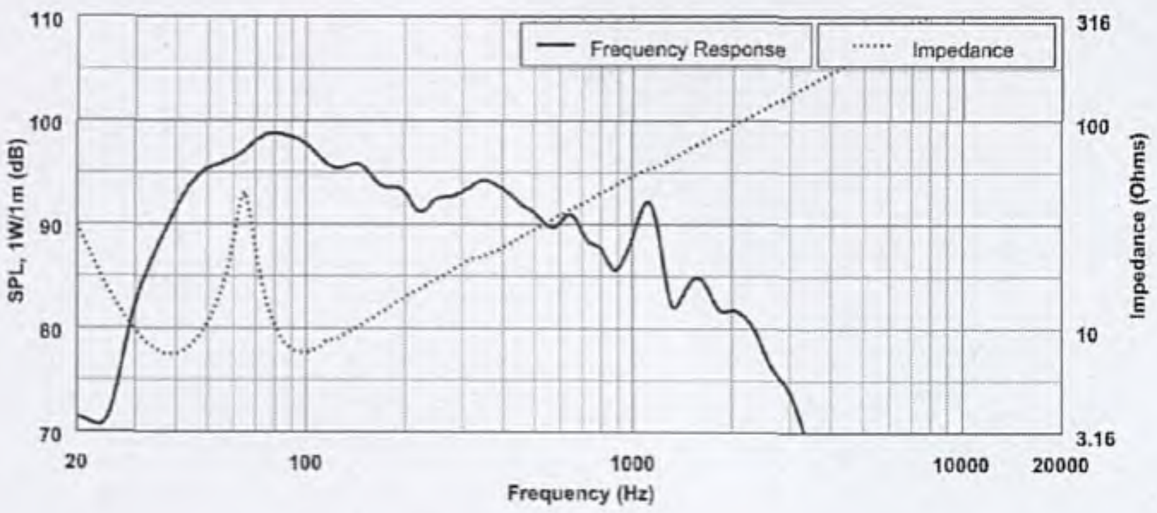

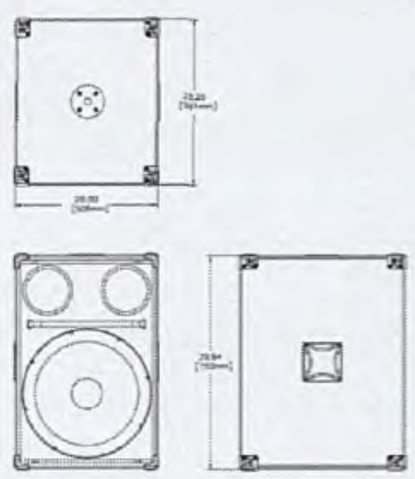

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Be Prepared

One of the best ways to avoid mistakes is to be prepared. For a DJ, this can mean a lot of things: having appropriate, reliable gear for the gig at hand; knowing what the client wants out of an event; having all performance elements clearly defined and rehearsed to precision; being mentally ready to serve the client's needs, as well as perform; and the list could go on and on.

Our goal at Mobile Beat is to help you in your quest to be the best-prepared DJ you can be—and to avoid mistakes as much as possible. In the latest "Interactive Connection," which is also our cover story, Todd Mitchem helps with the performance side of things by pointing out five common missteps he's observed among DJs, and providing ways to avoid them.

When it comes to gear preparation, our rundown of miniscule PA options will increase your ability to come through on that last-minute request for extra sound or help you handle your next outdoor gig more effectively. Back in the office, Jim Weisz offers an overview of the "Digital Business Tools" at your disposal for keeping on top of the books, the calendar and all that other fun stuff. Administrative mistakes can be the most costly of all! And speaking of cost, in "Reality Check," Mark Johnson takes another look at DJ pricing, this time from the perspective of multiple events with the same client. We invite your feedback on the DJ pricing issue. What's your perspective?

Twice every year, DJs come away from our Mobile Beat DJ Shows more prepared for success than ever. In this issue, we give you a taste of what the winter show had to offer, and direct your attention to the next opportunity for enrichment, coming up soon in Orlando. Don't make the mistake of missing it!

Dan Walsh, Managing Editor

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Find the Beat

DEAR MOBILE BEAT,

I took this picture before one of our high school dances, and I noticed that the current *Mobile Beat Magazine* was in the picture. Yes, we do take the magazines with us. They help us throughout the night with all kinds of ideas. This crowd was going crazy for everything from country to rap. That's how kids work around here, I guess. Thanks *Mobile Beat,* for doing a great job. Keep it up.

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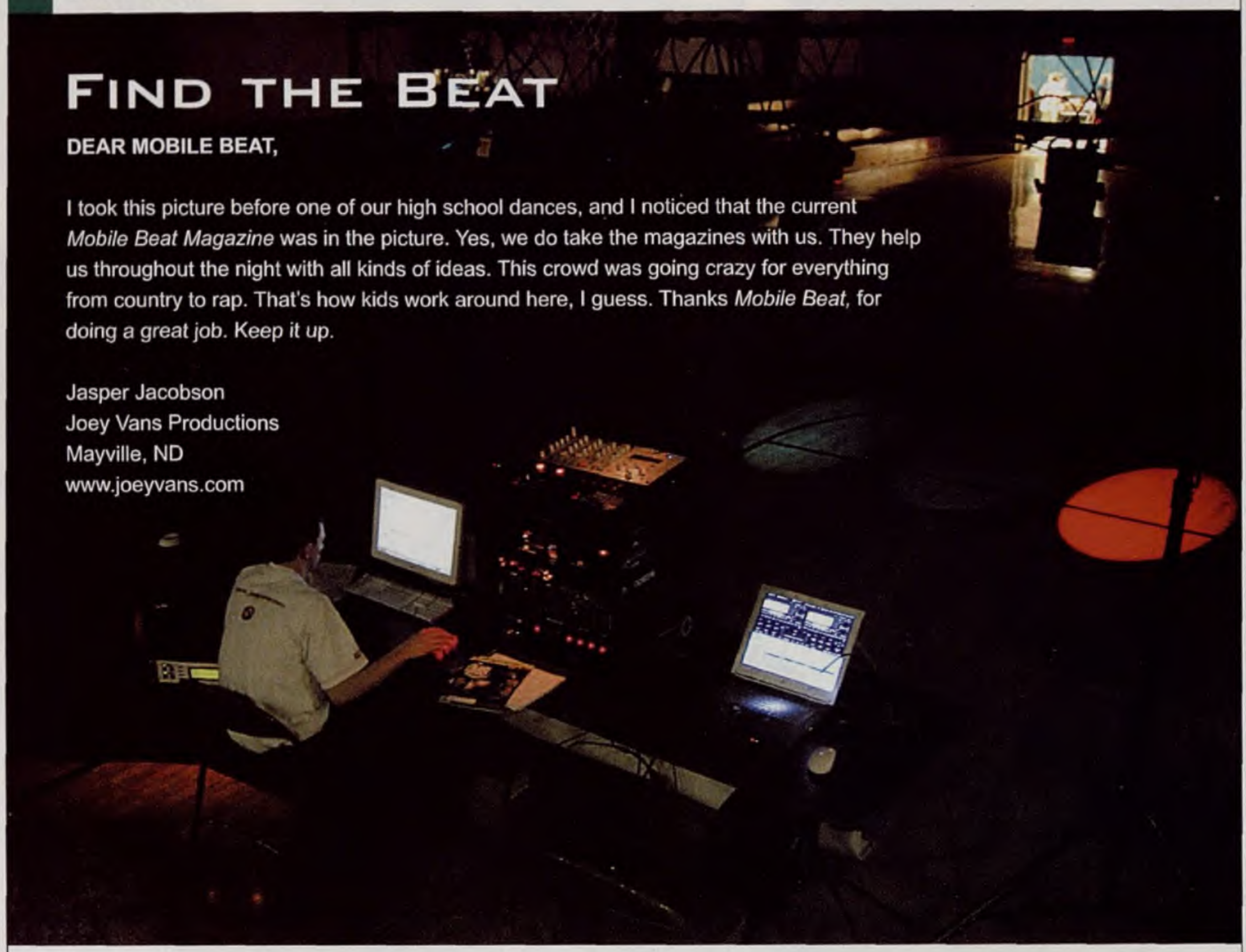

Who's Got Your Back?

DEAR EDITOR,

I am a longtime Mobile DJ and I work primarily in the wedding industry. Last week was a first for me. While at a large wedding reception in a brand new, wonderful hotel outside of Houston, the camera lenses of the wedding photographer were stolen. I am not the type of DJ that leaves his system very often during an event, and the photographer's bag was right next to the table that I was working behind. The perpetrator must have stolen them right from under my nose—not one, but three expensive, specialty lenses. This can't help the photographer who suffered this loss, who happens to be a friend of mine. But by being aware we can help all of our fellow banquet professionals. You know, we all want things that are light and easy to move, and because they are, they are easily stolen. I feel terrible about this and want all the other Mobile DJs out there to be alert. Let's not let wedding receptions become the easy target that some crooks seem to think they are.

Bill Cox, Vice-President
DJ's Unlimited, Inc., Houston, TX
Author of *The Ultimate Wedding Reception Book*

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MOBILE AMERICANS

With the dual goals of helping DJs improve business, as well as building momentum for his organization, American DJ Association (ADJA) President Peter Merry is spending a good portion of the year on a grand tour. He's presenting a free seminar entitled "Better Consultations Bring Better Bookings" and discussing ADJA member benefits. The month of March saw the president trekking up and down the east coast, speaking to groups in metropolitan New York City, Upstate New York, New Jersey, New England, Baltimore/DC, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. In April, Merry hit the Midwest, starting with Cleveland. In May he was scheduled for Texas and beyond.

Prizes have been awarded at each stop, including a Titan 250 effect light from the tour's sponsor, American DJ (www.americandj.com). Scott Davies, General Manager of the American DJ Group of Companies, said, "By sponsoring this tour, we are lending our support to their efforts and, hopefully, encouraging more DJs to attend Peter's seminars, which can be of tremendous benefit to veteran disc jockeys and newcomers alike."

According to Merry, having the backing of major industry members like American DJ greatly assists his organization in its mission. He said, "The ADJA is thrilled to have American DJ on board as a sponsor of this tour." Visit www.adja.org or call 888-723-5776 for details.

ARE YOU A CERTIFIABLE DISC JOCKEY?

The DJ Mix Academy, in Winchester, Massachusetts is now offering a comprehensive educational program for DJs: the Certificate Program in Disc Jockeying. Its focus is on building knowledge, skills, and competency in the art of DJing. "We anticipated the demand for DJ instruction would grow and with our comprehensive solution, students will have the knowledge and experience they need to become successful DJs," said Manny Ferreiros, co-founder of the DJ Mix Academy.

Students must complete four required and 3 elective courses, pass a final exam, create a mix CD, and pass a live DJing performance test. The curriculum consists of introductory, intermediate, and advanced courses in beat mixing, scratching, Mobile DJing, and PC DJing.

To accommodate students outside the Boston area, the academy will also offer the program in accelerated, multi-day sessions through its Mobile DJ Mix Academy. For more on the program, visit www.djmixacademy.com or call 781-756-0300.

STUDENTS ENJOY NUMARKS AT BERKLEE SCHOOL

Numark (www.numark.com) has become the premier equipment sponsor for Berklee College of Music's new DJ curriculum (www.berklee.edu). Based in Boston, the pioneering institution for contemporary music is breaking new ground yet again by becoming the first music college in the world to offer the study of turntablism. Numark is outfitting the classroom with state-of-the-art DJ gear, including TTX hybrid analog/digital turntables, cartridges, analog and digital DJ mixers, and CD turntables.

Professor Stephen Webber (pictured second from right), a veteran of classical, jazz and electronic music who is considered a leading authority on turntable education, will teach "Turntable Technique." Students will learn the art of playing the turntable, a defining element of hip-hop music that has spread throughout popular music. He authored the popular method, *Turntable Technique: The Art of the DJ* (Berklee Press, 2000).

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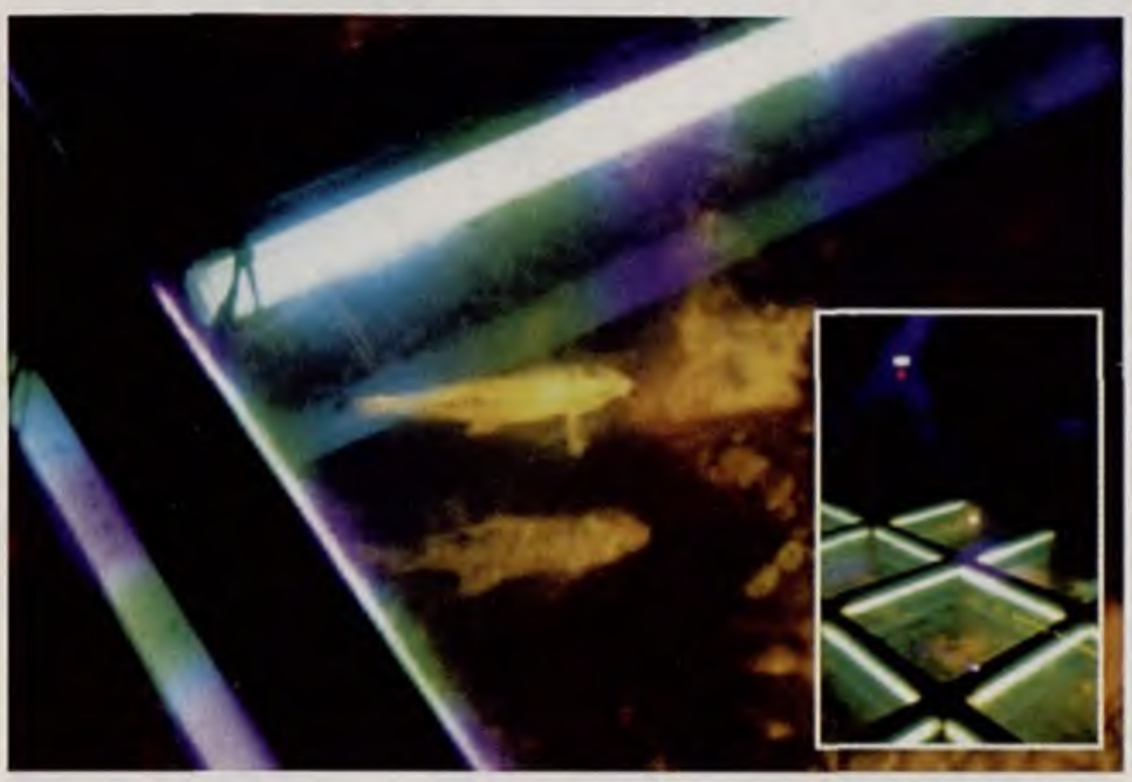
Dancing on Deep Water

In the ever-trendy, fast-paced, and highly competitive South Beach scene, club owners Peter and Tina Pekofsky have mastered the art of staying afloat, literally: Since 1997, they've operated Club Deep, where patrons dance the night away over a 2000-gallon aquarium. The dance floor's originality has made the club famous worldwide. The owners' talent for re-inventing the venue's image has made Club Deep Miami Beach's most enduring club.

This year, the Pekofskys undertook a complete renovation that included decking out the aquarium/dance floor with 34 CHAUVET COLORtubes™ LED fixtures. Patrons can now dance on glowing blocks of water with live fish swirling underneath. Above, the energy of CHAUVET scanners and lasers contrasts nicely with the soothing, watery scene underfoot. Check out the club at www.clubdeep.com and the lights at www.chauvetlighting.com.



ERG Carries Out ScreenPlay

Entertainment Resources Group (ERG) is now providing seven monthly DVD compilations from ScreenPlay VJ. "We explored a lot of options when it came to how we were going to best provide music videos on DVD to our subscriber base..." said Richard Gastmeier, President of ERG Music. "The decision...was made, based on the professionalism and quality exhibited by Screenplay."

ScreenPlay provides video compilations for a wide range of retail applications, servicing over 15,000 locations monthly. Programs are produced using uncompressed video and 16-bit audio, yielding "better-than-CD" quality. ERG's ace programming team is hard at work selecting the best new titles for inclusion on each of the ScreenPlay VJ DVDs. Club, Hits, Dance, Urban, Country, Rock, and Latin editions are available. Go to www.ergmusic.com for info. •

The Right Vibe

In the March issue of Mobile Beat (#86), on page 24 ("It's Hot") we incorrectly listed the phone number for info on LaserVibe compact laser systems. The correct number is 866-885-2737 (not -2730).

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At the heart of the new **Legend 250RX™** from **CHAUVET** is the popular MSD 250W high-intensity discharge lamp, widely used in upscale production environments. Its exciting glass gobos include a multicolored "crush dichroic" effect, a single-color dichroic effect, and a honeycomb-textured effect. 4 metal gobos were specially selected for unique beam shaping. 5 other gobos are included (3 metal, 2 glass). A full-range dimmer allows for smooth color, effect, and scene transitions, while a smooth, 3-facet prism rotates at variable speeds, widening and adding individual effects. Other features include microstepping motors, 16-bit mirror resolution, LED control readout, DMX control, master/slave operation, and sound-activated programs. MAP: $1,299.99

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www.chauvetlighting.com

Squeeze Play

Gemini has introduced the **CDX-402**, a professional **dual CD player** that can squeeze into 4 rack spaces. It features both 12% pitch control and pitch bend, providing the DJ with a good range for mixing. Its fast, dual-purpose search/jog wheel makes frame-accurate cueing of tracks a snap. The CDX-402 also features a fly cue button and a looping feature. Using the +10 track select button allows you to skip through your discs, 10 tracks at a time. The unit is also equipped with standard time and single, auto and continuous modes. The CDX-402 is perfect for DJs who need to make the best use of their available rack space. MSRP: $489.95

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NEW PRODUCTS

Road-Runner Collapses

Collapses in a good way, that is. The new **Road-Runner** from **Grundorf** is a collapsible equipment cart that can shrink to the size of a briefcase (6.88" x 16.5" x 22.25"). Simply swing the handle assembly up, lock it in position, pull up the handle extension and extend the carrying bed, if necessary. The useable bed size adjusts from 16.5" x 18" to 16.5" x 28" to accommodate larger loads. It can handle a total of 300 lbs. The frame is made of lightweight (18.3 lbs.) but strong aluminum. Dual swivel casters combine with dual rigid casters for optimal control. Vinyl bumpers protect the corners of the base, as well as the venue's walls. MSRP: $139.95

Grundorf Corp.
721 9th Ave. • Council Bluffs, IA 51501
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Fax: 712-322-3407
www.grundorf.com

Mix to the Max

The new **GigaMix Series** from **Alesis** includes 3 powered mixers cased in rugged ABS plastic enclosures. Topping the list of features are: internal power supplies; switchable 48V phantom power for condenser mics; an internal digital effects processor with 100 presets; 3-band EQ per channel; independent main mix and monitor controls; and dual effects loops. The **GigaMix 4fx** has 12 inputs, a single 200W amp, 4 mic/line inputs, and a 9-band graphic EQ. The **6fx** has 14 inputs, dual 300W amps, 6 mic/line inputs, and independent 9-band graphic EQs for main and monitor mixing. The **8fx** features 18 inputs, dual 400W amps, 8 mic/line inputs and independent graphic EQs. MSRPs: GigaMix 4fx - $499; 6fx - $649; 8fx - $799

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The Finishing Touch

Experienced DJs know that it's those extra touches that can make the difference between a standard gig and a truly stellar experience—for the DJ as well as the audience or the client. The following reviews indicate that the folks at the American DJ Group of Companies are aware of this, and are striving to provide products that can help you add the tasty icing to your performance cake, whether it's the visual or the sonic side.

Starry Starry Night

By Andy Schmitz

Treat your performance like the work of art that it is—give it a dazzling frame with the LED Curtain from American DJ

American DJ has long been in the business of giving performers of all sorts the boost they need to look more professional. With their lighting equipment and special effects they have provided fairly priced tools to wow audiences and improve images... and their new LED Curtain continues the tradition. Rather than providing an illuminating effect it creates an atmosphere—literally. With either a rainbow of glowing diodes or an all-white starscape, the LED Curtain lets you present yourself before a diamond-studded, 8' x 10' wall of black satin hung from a well-constructed frame.

Carrying the Stars in Your Car

The unit easily goes together in minutes, with no need for tools. The stands that hold the curtain up are lightweight and durable. They take up only a few feet of floor space at the bases, for easy hiding of the legs. All together, the curtain weighs approximately 40 pounds.

The top bar, which holds the top of the curtain, can be broken down, and the entire unit can shrink to as little as three feet wide. The crowning feature is that the LED Curtain will slide perfectly into the side door of any minivan or the back of almost any SUV out there...ah, mobility.

The entire unit comes in one heavy-duty travel bag. This revealed the only negative aspect of the LED Curtain package: a weak zipper. Although we packed all the parts of the curtain setup in their proper places, the zipper proved problematic. After a bit of a struggle, it eventually did close and stayed closed. This was a minor drawback though—the overall experience was one of a product that just might be the easiest and most transportable way to spruce up your act. If you're looking for a quick way to create a sparkling atmosphere with little effort, this is your solution.

Rubbing Shoulders with the Stars

As far as controlling the curtain's light effects, you can set it to pulse or create a wave effect at different speeds. The fanciest feature is the audio input, which allows your music to control the speed and variance of the lights. All of these controls functioned smoothly.

The LED Curtain can provide a cinematic feel, whether as a backdrop to performing or as a non-focal point background. It allows you to decide how much it's going to stand out. The curtain's starry night effect is ideal for a dimly lit club or banquet hall, but would not be out of place anywhere.

It's really quite simple, if you want a professional look without breaking your bank, this is the type of effect to go with. It will very ably give you an upgrade from that worn-out banner you've been using as your backdrop for years. Although success as a performer always relies on your personal performance, it can't hurt to have a little help from cool, unusual lighting effects. In the case of the LED Curtain, you'll get a lot of help!

> "A cinematic feel"

LED Curtain - MSRP: **$599.95**
www.americandj.com

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Speak-Easy

By R.A. Lindquist

Clear the air and be heard with American Audio's 16-Channel Selectable UHF Wireless Microphone

Whenever I think of wireless microphones, I experience a mental rewind to that episode of *The Jetsons* where Judy and her friends were enjoying the pleasure of dancing in thin air thanks to their anti-gravity floor. The irony was that while technology had put anti-gravity floors into every new-millennium blue-collar home, the singer was using a wired microphone. You may have to wait awhile yet for anti-gravity dance floors, but the good news is, there are plenty of wireless microphones for you to choose from. And if you're seriously looking for a bargain, here's one of the best.

A Flexible Performer

It's no secret that American Audio, like its lighting counterpart American DJ, is a DJ-specific company on a mission to provide working mobiles with good gear at affordable prices. They are not alone on this mission as they have several other formidable competitors. This is a good thing—for you. It's what keeps the wheels turning in the research and development departments and brings life to products such as the WM UHF16 wireless microphone. It's possibly the best wireless you'll find at this price point or anywhere near it.

The importance of wireless microphone technology to the Mobile DJ simply can't be overstated. Being free to move about the room and interact with the crowd is not just for show, it's essential. There's not much worse than showing up at a venue and finding that your wireless can't tell your voice from taxi cab calls or TV news reports. Even worse, is when you find your mic is on the same channel as the DJ in the next room, and he has more power.

With the WM UHF16, simply unscrew the cap to the battery compartment. There's a little flat-head screwdriver tucked in there for just such emergencies. You'll also find a little dial with 16 frequency settings. Just change the frequency on the mic and on the receiver unit and you should be good to go.

Setting up the unit is no different than most other wireless units. Just connect it to the mixer and power up. The WM UHF16 offers balanced and unbalanced connections, again showing its flexibility.

Unleashing Your Vocal Power

Performance-wise, we found that the WM UHF16 offers more than adequate coverage for typical halls. It's also quite comfortable to work with. The rubberized coating on the transmitter's plastic case gives it a solid, sturdy feel and it won't slip out of your hands, even if you have to hand it to a client for an announcement after you were chowin' down on the buffet chicken. A switch for on, off and mute is included.

As for the sound of the microphone, we noted a pronounced proximity effect that gives it a deep and boomy sound up close. This is great if you're trying to create vocal percussion effects. For typical announcing and voice-overs, however, you'll need to keep a comfortable distance or speak over the element, not directly into it. We also found that a 10dB boost on the treble and 5 to 10dB drop on the bass greatly improved intelligibility in a crowded room. There was very little noise from the receiver, even when we cranked it up all the way.

Possibly the best part of the WM UHF16 is that you get all this performance power for well under $250 retail. It carries a two-year warranty and comes with free customer support to help get you up and running, pronto.

WM UHF16 - MSRP: **$219.95**
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Pint-Sized Portability

Portability is a good thing. As Mobile DJs know all too well, some pieces of gear are more moveable than others. Manufacturers have come up with a number of combinations to unlock increased PA mobility. One approach involves putting multiple components together in an easily manageable package. Another marries the components, integrating them into the same structure. Basic single-box solutions include the following: amp+mixer (powered mixers), amp+speaker (powered speakers), and amp+mixer+speaker.

While they may not be household names in the DJ gear marketplace, the companies mentioned in the following reviews have been providing PA products for a long time and have built good reputations. Here, Carvin offers an amp+mixer+speaker combination, while Soundcraft joins the pursuit of portability with a powered mixer. Hopefully, you'll find some food for thought about your own approach to extra mobility as you read on.

A FRIEND INDEED

Carvin's StageMate will be there for you—whenever and wherever you need it

By R. A. Lindquist

The bridesmaids' dresses are dancing like flowers on the breeze. The groom stands waiting under the shade of the gazebo. Ringing clearly above the sounds of birds, bees and rustling sycamore leaves, processional music is playing. The bride moves gracefully forward across the grass...

How do you accomplish this little bit of wedding day poetry, while ALSO having the dance floor inside the nearby party house pre-wired for musical excitement? What you need is a small amp, speaker and mixer all in one box. It should be lightweight, with a handle. 60 to 100 watts of power would be great. If it can run on a self-contained battery, all the better. And, if it included digital effects, that would be the nuts.

There are many compact mixer/amp combinations out there, but to date, the only one we've found that offers everything on the wish list is Carvin's StageMate™ S400D. Carvin has managed to stuff a 100-watt amp, a two-way speaker system (tweeter/10" woofer), and a four-channel mixer into a 35-pound box that's scarcely 18" high, with a 12" x 12" footprint. The mixer has inputs for mics and instruments and RCA inputs for CD/MP3 players. It can be stand-mounted for improved range. It also has on-board battery power and a built-in 24-bit digital effects processor. Impressive.

Backstage Support

The mixer is on the back, with inputs for mics and instruments. Channel 1, which features a three-band EQ, is designed to accommodate an acoustic or electric guitar using a 1/4" plug. Why would a DJ need such a feature? If you haven't encountered a wedding where the bride's little brother is scheduled to play his wedding song, you will, soon enough. Another thing...can you say "rental?"

Channels 2-4 have two bands of EQ and feature XLR mic inputs as well as 1/4" instrument inputs. Channel 4 replaces the 1/4" input with a pair of RCAs, giving you a channel to hook in a CD player directly, or an aux feed from your DJ mixer. There's also an output that allows you to feed a second speaker from the StageMate's amp. Operating with an external speaker will increase coverage at the expense of battery life.

As mentioned above, the S400D comes with 256 digital effects, based on reverb, chorus, flange and echo. Their quality is particularly impressive, with no perceivable degradation in sound, even on the slowest echo. Wedding singers are sure to appreciate the tight reverb, while little bro with the guitar will like the chorus. A digital knob lets you select which effect to use. You're limited to one at a time, across the board (i.e., non-assignable). Other knobs control the depth and amount of effect on each channel.

Battery-Packed

Having play-anywhere power built-in really lifts this little PA to a new level. Carvin says it will operate up to four hours with one battery and up to six hours with two batteries, under normal operating conditions (meaning not a continuous 100 watts). Run it consistently in the red or with an external speaker and battery life drops. Plug in the AC and it pops right back on while recharging. You can also charge it from a 12v DC automotive lighter jack. It takes about eight hours to recharge to full power. If you are planning on playing where the AC isn't, you may want to add a second battery (or park close by and bring jumper cables).

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Photo: Mike Pinto

Unchained Melody
The ultimate in mobility for DJs is the outdoor event. The location might be a city park, a formal garden, a grassy field on the family farm, a secluded summer cabin, or a gazebo outside a banquet facility, just like the one mentioned in the article's intro. If you want your share of these fresh-air gigs, you'll need to be prepared with a system that can break free from the chain of the orange extension cord. Carvin's StageMate S400D provides a high-quality option for getting the job done—out under the sun.

Carvin products are available through factory direct purchase only, not in stores. Go to **www.carvin.com** for complete ordering information.

MSRP: StageMate S400D - $489.98

Carvin Corporation
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Sound Distilled to a Light but Potent Brew

By R. A. Lindquist

Hand trucks be damned! Real men carry their speakers, amp and mixer by hand and all at one time

No matter how you look at it, set-up time is time wasted—you're paid to play. Anything you can do to reduce the minutes you spend loading-in is jingle in your pocket. To this end, many manufacturers have been noodling up unique ways to combine components in single cases.

In the old days, there was no getting around the fact that you needed to carry at least two speakers, plus an amp, plus a mixer. This meant several trips, and carrying separate cases. Here in the new millennium, there are better ways. Thanks to lightweight, reliable amplifiers dreamt up by folks in lab coats, we now have powered mixers and powered speakers. But how can you carry two speakers and your amp and mixer in one trip? Set aside the obvious question ("Why?") and just assume, for a moment, that hand trucks don't exist. Let's also assume you have two good arms and can carry a speaker with each. Now, how are you going to carry an amp and mixer? How about just slinging it over your shoulder?

It's Not a Cooler...It's Cooler!

There's a very fine line that separates the end product of careful planning, skillful engineering and relentless testing from simply a great idea hatched over a few ales. "Case" in point: the GigRac 600 from Soundcraft. We're really not sure which side of the line was responsible. On the "rocket surgery" side, you have a well-chiseled design that required some quality time in the think tank. On the tavern side, the unit sports features that are just too cool to have come from those geeks in lab coats.

Topping the list of GigRac 600's best features is what it doesn't have—things you really don't need. What you do have is an all-purpose unit with eight inputs and dual 300-watt amps, which can be configured as a 600-watt mono house system or 300-watt mono house system with 300 watts for stage monitors. (An even more budget-conscious unit, the GigRac 300, with 300 watts total power, is also available.) In addition, it all comes mounted in a vented case that's tougher than a turtle shell. To release the lid, just unbuckle the strap. There are no latches to get caught on clothes, cables or other pieces of gear. Inside the lid, there's a web of bungee cords perfect for storing a couple of mics. With the top closed and "buckled," you can carry the unit over your shoulder like a newspaper carrier on his daily route.

The front panel of the GigRac is a picture of functional simplicity. Each of the eight inputs has two bands of EQ (treble and bass, ±15dB), an effect send knob, and level controls for the monitor mix and main mix. Knobs are color coded all the way across so you don't accidentally boost the bass when you want a little more reverb.

All eight inputs can be used for microphones. Inputs 1-4 have 48v phantom power and an attenuation pad for matching levels, while 5-8 can also be used for instruments or line inputs. Stereo RCA connectors that sum to mono are provided on two of the inputs—a perfect design for use with a dual CDP. In addition, there are eight assignable, preset reverb/echo effects, so you can add a little echo to your vocals without affecting the music. There's also a 7-band graphic EQ, submix input, 10-segment LED output meter, and an amp clip light. Outputs are provided for Speakon connectors and 1/4" phone plugs.

10 Minutes to Go

While it may be quite insane to actually carry two speakers with a GigRac slung over your shoulder, it's not a particu-

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larly tough task. For this report, we teamed the GigRac with our workhorse EV SX100 cabinets. All together the system weighed well under a hundred pounds, but trying to actually maneuver down a narrow hallway was akin to a Hummer doing a k-turn in a china shop.

With load-in complete, it was simply a matter of popping the covers off the GigRac, running the speaker cables and connecting up our sound sources. For our "on-the-road" situation, we used the GigRac as a PA for a six-piece praise and worship team at a local church. The job required four vocal mics, two piano mics and direct inputs from two guitars, along with house system and stage monitors. Total set-up time was less than 30 minutes. For a normal DJ performance, it should take less than ten minutes, depending on the venue. This versatility makes the GigRac a truly worthwhile investment for the DJ who does everything from small-gig sound reinforcement to high-end karaoke to typical DJ events.

A Slip-Up?

There is one issue, however, that may have slipped by the designers during that last round of brews. It concerns that rough, tough case itself. It's slippery. Not only is it slippery, but it's molded in such a way that there's very little contact between the case and the surface it's set on. It's almost like it's on ice skates. In our real world test, we had the GigRac set up on a wooden stool, which is a pretty common way to do things in bars, coffeehouses and smaller venues. The moment we turned our backs, CRASH! It was on the floor. The good news was, there was no apparent damage to the electronics. The bad news was, one of the speaker jacks had busted so we were out one channel.

Only when the dust had cleared and everything was being put away did we find, tucked away in the removable cover of the unit, the "GigMat"—a rubbery pad that can, and should, be placed under the GigRac to prevent it from sliding off a table. Wouldn't it make more sense just to mount rubber strips along the bottom of the case?

While the folks at Soundcraft ponder that thought, let's review everything in the plus column: 8 channels, 600 watts, eight preset effects, and all the rest of the ingredients it takes for great sound in an over-the-shoulder case not much larger than a cooler. We'll drink to that.•

To get all the specifics on the GigRac, go straight to **www.gigrac.com**. For more on Soundcraft and the company's wide selection of professional mixers, check out **www.soundcraft.com**.

MSRPs: GigRac 600 - $649.99; GigRac 300 - $429.99

Soundcraft • 8500 Balboa Blvd. • Northridge, CA 91329
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Mix It Up: Multiple Mobile PA Combinations

These are just highlights of what the manufacturers have to offer. Make sure to check out their Web sites for more portable PA options.

COMPANY	POWERED SPEAKERS	AMP/MIXER/ SPKR COMBOS	INTEGRATED SYSTEMS	WEB SITE
American Audio	APX-Power Pro			www.americanaudio.us
Audio2000's		AWP6402 PA		www.audio2000s.com
B-52 Pro Audio	ACT 1515		MATRIX 1000 Sys	www.b-52pro.com
Crate			TV-100 Traveler	www.crateaudio.com
dB Technologies			Opera L600 Sys	www.dbtechnologies.com
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Galaxy		CORE PA5X140		www.galaxyaudio.com
Gem Sound	MA-1500		COMBO-70	www.gemsound.com
Gemini	GX-450		XTR-400	www.geminidj.com
JBL Professional	EON15 G2		E-System 15	www.jblpro.com
Mach Speakers	M-Flex 15			www.mach.dk
Mackie Designs	SRM450			www.mackie.com
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Phonic			RoadGear	www.phonic.com
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Yamaha	MSR100			www.yamaha.com/proaudio
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The ABCs of DMX

A clear explanation dispels the mystery surrounding digital lighting control

By Barry Abrams

No other protocol is as ubiquitous in the lighting field as DMX-512, and it's easy to see why. DMX-512 has both simplified and enriched our jobs since its creation in 1986. It gives us full control over the what, when, where and duration of a unit's performance. And we are not limited to any one manufacturer's gear because the protocol gives us a uniform standard of transmission methods.

Yet, there are DJs who remain somewhat DMX-shy. They tend to stick to the plug and play fixtures that they know best. They also associate DMX with stiff prices and tech jargon.

In fact, DMX doesn't have to be expensive and it isn't complicated. Even classic plug and play devices have been widely revisited and made DMX compatible. Prices continue to drop, so that more of us can afford to incorporate the technology into our shows, even on a shoestring budget. And it's well worth the expense.

DMX Vs. Plug and Play

Let's take a few minutes to ponder some of the advantages of DMX over non-DMX fixtures. Here's one: A fixture controlled by DMX can effectively set the mood for any event or reflect the mood of any song. But aren't all types of lights capable of creating moods? Sure, they can. But without DMX, you would need a specific fixture for, say, a slow song, and another one for a fast song, mainly because most sound-activated effects were created to react to fast-paced music. They use fast motors and aren't efficient with slow tunes. By contrast, stepper motors in DMX units can move fast or slow, depending on programming.

Consider the ever-popular double derby-style effect and its sound-activated crisscrossing beams. If you incorporate DMX into that same fixture, you will gain control over the speed of the beams, along with the stutter and shutter effects. And most importantly, you'll also control when the unit comes on during your show and how long it stays on. This is a lot more exciting than projecting the same beams at roughly the same speed over and over, isn't it? And with DMX, you will now be able to have several of these fixtures perform in sync and you'll be able to program a show ahead of time. That'll free you to interact with the crowd at your gig. Press a button, start your show, it's that easy.

Also, the ability to synchronize the performance of your lights gives you a greater flexibility and more precision in designing your shows. You can, with the proper controller, stop several scanners or yokes on a given color or gobo at the same time. This might let you spotlight a special couple dancing, for example. Or you can create a great effect by hitting a mirror ball—and leave your follow spot and pin spots home!

Longevity is another advantage of DMX fixtures. They hold on better than non-DMX fixtures because they are usually of higher quality, utilizing stepper and micro-stepping motors instead of standard motors with gears that tend to wear out over time.

Will your customers notice the difference? Yes, they will, both in terms of the quality of your lights and your command of the show. When Grandma at table three complains that the lights are hitting her in the eyes, there is no need to move your lighting tree or reconfigure your whole set up. Just adjust the program so that your lights aim elsewhere. Conversely, when the bride and groom are making a toast, you can move any of your lights to spotlight them, something you can't do without intelligent lights.

That said, should you get rid of your plug and play units? Absolutely not! In fact, many produce effects that aren't seen in DMX fixtures. But you should at least purchase a DMX relay pack, which provides a number of on/off switches (relays) that you can use to turn your plug and play fixtures on and off via DMX. And whether you are a novice or already a convert, you've got to familiarize yourself with the basic principles behind DMX in order to make educated buying decisions. It can be tedious but it's time well spent.

DMX at Work

DMX-512, or the Digital (D) Multiplex (MX) Data Transmission standard, was created by the Engineering Commission of the United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Inc. (USITT) and originally targeted dimmers. The basic idea was to provide uniform transmission methods to control lighting equipment.

As we speak, these standards of operation are being reviewed and updated. Not to worry: the revised protocol, known as DMX-512A, is intended partly to make troubleshooting easier and it won't mean that you have to toss out your current fixtures. They'll be fully compatible with the revised version.

In essence, the technology allows control of up to 512 "channels" per data link (DMX cable), shared between fixtures connected in a daisy-chain configuration. Each channel was originally designed to control the brightness of a lamp but now does much more. Visualize 512 sliders on a lighting console connected to 512 light bulbs. Each slider represents one channel with an assigned value between 0 and 255. Moving a slider within these assigned values gives you fine control over the intensity of light output. At the two extremes, you'll get your bulb completely turned off when you set your slider on the 0 position and you'll get the bulb fully on when you set your slider to the 255 position. The slider's position is translated and communicated over the data link at a speed of 250 Kb/sec as an 8-bit protocol.

Now, imagine having the same degree of control over all the functions of a lighting effect: pan, tilt, color, gobo, shutter, focus, etc. The "intelligence" of intelligent lighting is nothing more than the ability to control, via DMX cable, all the personality traits of a fixture. Each of these functions is assigned to a distinct channel within a value range of 0 to 255. You'll find these assigned values in the owner's manual of your particular unit. A function may be assigned one specific value for indexing, or a range of values to allow for variations in performance, output, movement, positions, dimming, etc.

Let's say that we have a three-channel unit with the following functions: pan, tilt, and color/gobo. The functions are controlled by channel 1, 2 and 3 respectively and each channel has pre-assigned value ranges. Your chart will look like this:

DMX VALUE	PAN (Ch 1)	TILT (Ch 2)	COLOR/GOBO (Ch 3)
0-9	Left	Up	Color/Gobo 1
10-19			Color/Gobo 2
20-29			Color/Gobo 3
30-39			Color/Gobo 4
40-49			Color/Gobo 5
50-59			Color/Gobo 6
60-69			Color/Gobo 7
70-79			Color/Gobo 8
80-89			Color/Gobo 9
90-99			Color/Gobo 10
100-109			Color/Gobo 11
110-119			Color/Gobo 12
120-129	Center	Center	Color/Gobo 13
130-139			Color/Gobo 14
140-149			Color/Gobo 15
150-159			Color/Gobo 16
160-204			Rotate Slow
205-249			Rotate Fast

Now, how do we make it all work? With a controller, of course. The sliders in your DMX-512 controller let you "talk" to your unit via your DMX cable.

Start by Taking a Dip

Ah, but there's one preliminary step you have to take to make this all work. First, you must set your dipswitches or digital display to the proper starting channel. Your controller's instruction manual will show you the proper start point for each unit. For units with digital displays, simply enter the number from the manual. It's a bit more difficult for units with dipswitches. There are nine required dipswitches that create 511 start channels. Some units have extra dipswitches for added functions, such as stand-alone, invert, and focus.

To properly set the dipswitches, first determine the start channel for each fixture. Let's assume that the controller that we are using allows us to utilize all the channels without skipping any and we are using four three-channel fixtures. Fixture #1 will start on channel 1. But we know that this fixture utilizes three channels (1-3) so the next available channel for fixture #2 will be channel 4. Thus our second unit will start at channel 4 and utilize three channels (4, 5, 6); then the third unit will start at channel 7 and utilize channels 7, 8 and 9; finally, our fourth fixture will start at channel 10 and utilize channels 10, 11 and 12.

The nine dipswitches on the unit translate to the following channel values or start points, based on the binary code:

Dipswitches	Channel Values
1	1
2	2
3	4
4	8
5	16
6	32
7	64
8	128
9	256

To keep abreast of the latest in DMX technology, visit the USITT.org site where drafts of the DMX-512 and DMX-512A protocols are available for sale.

Dipswitches must be on and must correspond to the start channel values for each unit. It may be necessary to do some addition to figure out the proper dipswitches to turn on. In our example, we know that our first unit starts on channel value 1 so we only need to turn on dipswitch 1 (its assigned value is 1). Our second unit starts on channel 4. The table shows that you'll need to turn on dipswitch 3, only because it has an assigned value of 4. But our third unit starts on channel 7. Now what? Do the math. You need your values to add up to 7. Therefore you'll use dipswitches 1, 2 and 3 because they have a combined value of 7 (1+2+4). Our fourth unit starts on channel value 10 so it will be necessary to turn on dipswitch 2 and 4 (based on dipswitches 2 and 4 having a value of 2+8).

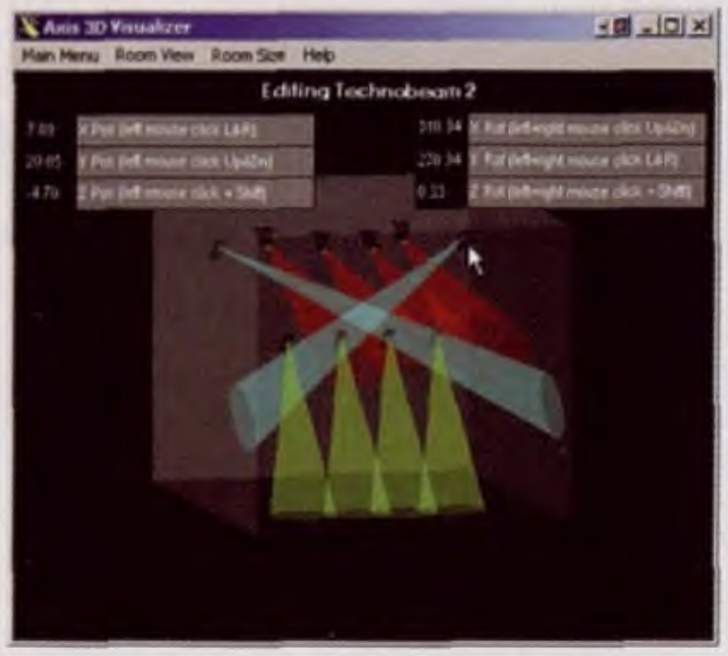
Will your customers notice the difference? Yes, they will, both in terms of the quality of your lights and your command of the show.

That's just about the hardest part. Once you have figured out which dipswitches to turn on, it's just a matter of connecting your DMX cables to carry the data from the controller to your units. Use high-quality DMX cables to provide greater shielding and prevent interference. The USITT DMX-512 protocol sets the standard for five-pin connectors, of which only three pins are utilized. As a result, many manufacturers use the three-pin configuration in their designs, but don't worry: converters are widely available, if you have a five-pin fixture and a three-pin controller or vice versa.

Now all you need to do is connect your DMX cable serially, from the controller to your first unit, from your first unit to the second, and so on until all units are daisy-chained. You're all set to begin programming your own shows, guided by your operator's manual.

Happy programming!

Barry Abrams is product development manager at CHAUVET. He can be reached via e-mail at Barry@chauvetlighting.com. You can also fax your comments, questions and suggestions for future columns to his attention at 954-929-5560.



Wielding the Light Axis

Leviton's NSI Division has put their marketing muscle behind the Axis lighting control system, which is now called the Leviton Axis Lighting Controller™. Featuring point-and-click programming and advanced effects generation, Axis makes show production easy. It is available in two versions, Pro and Basic, each with identical features, but with channel limitations on the latter. When used with one or more Axis Point USB to DMX Interfaces, the Pro version lets you easily expand the number of devices in your show. Among many other features, Axis includes: an Advanced Shape Generator; "immediate result" variations to active effects; MIDI, AVI, MPEG, and WAV event sequencing; the ability to play 8 shows at once; and a spotlight mode for "special" fixtures. Go to the Leviton/NSI site to download a demo and for complete info on the software and its associated hardware. - www.nsicorp.com

Music Management Takes Flight

Intermedia Design has released Helium 2 v1.7.7, an extensive music manager for users with just a few records or DJs with thousands who want to keep track of their entire music collection. Browse by album cover thumbnails or view your music by artist, album, genre, year or rating. Helium 2 is equipped with a number of tools and wizards for quick artist/album information editing. A function to extract artist and album information from filenames to insert into tags is a nice timesaver for DJs with a lot of music to catalog. The program supports music CDs and audio files in MP3, OGG, WMA, MPC and MP+ formats, along with ID3v1, ID3v2, Lyrics3, OGG and WMA tags. Helium 2 runs under Windows 98/ME/2000/XP/2003. MSRP: $35.00 - www.helium2.com

Driving an Auvi

Looking to give the iPod a run for its money, a company called Auvi has released the pocket-sized SA1500 USB 2.0 Multi-Format Hard Drive/Digital Jukebox. Claiming to be the slimmest and lightest 1.8" hard drive player available, this drive was named a CES Innovations 2004 Design and Engineering Award Honoree at the last Consumer Electronics Show. You can pack a ton of music into its 20 GB drive. Along with fast USB 2.0 data transfer, the SA1500 is backward compatible with earlier USB standards. The unit supports MP3 and WMA audio formats and can also be used as an external data drive. A rechargeable/replaceable lithium-ion battery offers 20+ hours of continuous operation. The SA1500 will interface with Windows 98/SE/ME/2000/XP and Mac OS 9.2 or higher. MSRP: $299.99 - www.auviworld.com

Manipulating Images

By Dan Walsh

Easy video editing and DVD creation from MAGIX

The other day, I saw a TV news report on a study showing that young kids watch too much TV—that it actually rewires their brains in questionable ways. Well, duh. Did we need a study to tell us that? All I have to do is look in the mirror to find a recovering TV addict. Let's face it: most of us under the age of 40 or so have never been without a video screen in our lives.

So, when I installed and started playing with Movies on CD & DVD from MAGIX, I was only mildly surprised at the rush of excitement I felt. Although I've never edited video before, the idea of actually putting together a "movie" for once, rather than just passively watching, produced a spark in my TV-rewired brain.

The software's potential as a DJ promotional tool immediately came to mind. CD-ROMs and DVDs are competing more and more with business cards for the position of "key marketing tool" for DJs. It only stands to reason. People want to see you performing. People have DVD players. DVDs are easier to navigate, and a lot less bulky than videotapes. Bottom line: a digital "business card" will make you look like you are in sync with the changing times—a cutting-edge professional.

Making Movies

The first step is finding the source material for your masterpiece. With the proper hardware (see System Requirements) you can capture video directly from your digital or analog video camera. You can also import digital video files from other sources, but be careful not to use copyrighted material on your promo DVD. Movies on CD & DVD automatically recognizes individual scenes and saves them as separate chapters. You can also add narration and background music, if necessary. (Again, be careful when using extra material. The good news is that you can find a lot of "royalty free" soundtrack music and sound effects on the Web, some for free, and other pro-level stuff for various fees. The MAGIX software also comes with 350 license-free animations, sample videos, titles and sounds.)

Next comes the real fun—editing and enhancing your raw scenes. The software's tools make it easy to cut and rearrange your footage, and then add crossfades and titles. A storyboard provides an overview of your project, and a four-track timeline lays out your project linearly for editing and dubbing. You can choose from more than 70 transitions and sample titles to enhance your scenes.

Prizes and Improvements

Software Chosen at Show

At ProDJ.com's first annual DJ's Choice Awards Ceremony, which took place at the 2004 Mobile Beat DJ Show in Las Vegas, Visiosonic's PCDJ FX software was named "Computer DJ Software or Hardware of the Year." Members of ProDJ.com's professional community decided on the winners by way of online voting.

To be nominated for a DJ's Choice Award (www.djschoiceawards.com), products had to have been available on the market during 2003. ProDJ.com staff chose category nominees based on industry innovation, product quality, and value. Other DJ performance software products that were nominated included FinalScratch from Stanton and ALCATech's BPM Studio.

"The DJ's Choice Award is one we value more than any other because it comes directly from the community of working professional DJs," said Visiosonic's COO, David Oak.

Upgrade Parade

Stanton has released FinalScratch v1.5. Powered by Traktor, this new version is the first to run natively on the Windows XP platform (without Linux) and on Mac OSX (10.3 "Panther"). It features a high-quality Key Correct function for maintaining the pitch when changing tempo, the ability to fully re-size the user interface, plus better overall performance. Check it out at www.finalscratch.com.

For dedicated Mac users, Fidelity Media, Inc. released MegaSeg 2.7.2, an update to their professional Mobile DJ software. The update adds a new Playlist Rules option that allows Playlist Schedules to maintain their category order. Other tweaks include longer filenames in the auto-rename feature, improved importing code, and other bug fixes. An updated demo version is now available at www.megaseg.com.

The latest version of Guitar Tracks Pro 3 is available from Cakewalk. Based on Cakewalk's SONAR audio and MIDI technology, Guitar Tracks Pro 3 provides all the professional tools necessary to create quality music productions using your home computer. Of interest to DJs are improved audio looping tools and ACID™ loop support; sample-accurate syncing with hardware sequencers; and an extensive library of ACID loops for the quick creation of backing tracks at any tempo. Go to www.cakewalk.com for details.

If your footage has problems with lighting or sound, there are image and sound restoration tools you can use. Tweak the picture's color, focus, contrast, and brightness. Add extra presence or stereo enhancement to the audio. The noise reduction feature is especially helpful, including a camera noise removal command with settings for specific cameras.

When you're finally done putting the finishing touches on your project, it's time to burn it to disc. You can generate VCDs or SVCDs with the software, but I found creating a DVD to be the most fun. Movies on CD & DVD can produce interactive onscreen disc menus automatically or it lets you custom-design them with backgrounds, screen splitting and text. You can import your own JPEG or BMP images to use as background motifs. The software will even process the entire project for you, from disc menu to finished DVD, in one automatic session. Based on personal experience, though, I'm betting that you tweakheads out there will not relinquish that much control to the machine.

This time, your clients will be the ones mesmerized by the video—images of you in all your professional glory that emanate from the screen.

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www.magix.com

System Requirements

400 MHz processor
128 MB RAM (256 MB recommended)
1 GB free hard disk space for video files (5 GB recommended)
Hard drive with data access rate min. 4 MB/s recommended
800 x 600 display resolution
16-bit SVGA graphic card with minimum 4 MB RAM
16-bit soundcard
CD-ROM drive for installation / CD/DVD burner
Windows 98/98SE/ME/2000/XP
Video capture card: Digital - OHCI-compatible IEEE-1394 DV card (FireWire) with Microsoft DirectX8a-compatible driver; Analog - card compatible with Video For Windows or DirectShow
Supported video formats: MPEG-1, MPEG-2, AVI, DV AVI (Type 1 and 2), MPEG-4 and DivX compatibility (codecs required), Windows Media 9, QuickTime
Supported image formats: BMP, JPEG
Supported sound formats: MP3, WAV, MPEG-1, WMA, CD-A

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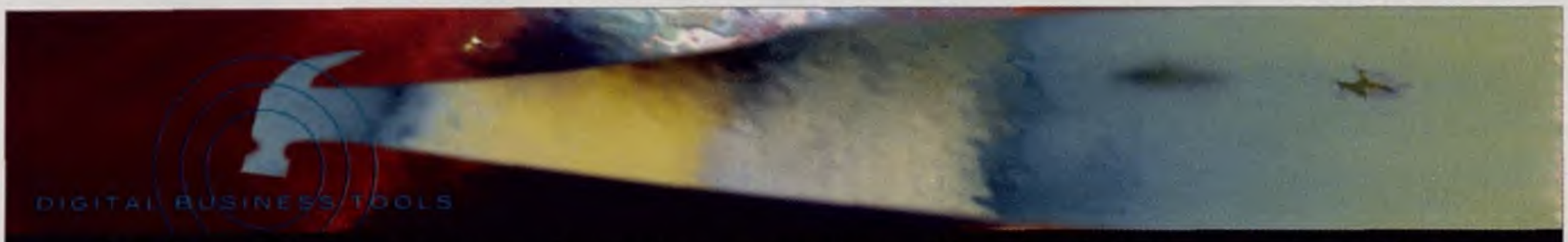

Here's a Quick Survey of Some General-purpose Software That Can Help You Get the Job Done

Software for Hard-Working DJs

By Jim Weisz

Over the past few years there has been an increase in software made specifically for DJs. While those programs can handle many of your daily business needs there are thousands of other software options available to help fill the voids left by the specialized software. The following software titles are not DJ-specific but may help you run your DJ business more effectively.

Adobe Acrobat 6.0 (Standard: $276): The PDF format has become widely used for e-mailing files while maintaining the look of the original document. The best way to describe a PDF file is that it's like taking a snapshot of the file and creating a new file from that image. The Acrobat Reader is a free utility, however, you must buy the software to actually make PDF files. Acrobat can be used to send contracts, planners, various flyers and forms to clients or potential clients. One of the best aspects of sending PDF files is that anyone can open them without having to buy any additional software. If the person you are sending PDF files to doesn't have the Acrobat Reader they can quickly download it for free.

Adobe Audition 1.0 ($289): Formerly known as Cool Edit Pro, Adobe bought out its creator, Syntrillium Software, in May 2003 and re-released it a few months later as Adobe Audition. A relatively inexpensive program for digital audio production, Adobe Audition can be used to create custom show openers and closers, edits of songs, sweepers for use between songs and to do other audio editing for up to 128 tracks. Great for beginners to audio editing and production.

Similar programs: Pro Tools, Sound Forge

Audiograbber (Freeware): One of the most complete audio rippers available, Audiograbber became freeware as of February, 2004. Audiograbber utilizes the FreeDB online database so you don't have to type in all the information about the CDs you're ripping, unless they aren't already entered in the extensive online database. CD ripping speeds range from 32 to 320kbps. It was created by the same person who created AudioCatalyst, which he sold to Xing.

Similar programs: Exact Audio Copy, Musicmatch Jukebox, AudioCatalyst

Intuit QuickBooks 2004 (Basic: $199; Professional: $279): QuickBooks is a great solution for managing accounting tasks for your business. You can print checks, pay bills, track payments from clients, track business expenses, produce year-end profits & losses reports and organize all your business finances.

Similar programs: Quicken, Peachtree Complete Accounting, MS Money

Microsoft Office 2003 (Standard: $369; Professional: $459): This suite of software can really help you manage your DJ business. Included with Microsoft Office XP Standard is Outlook, PowerPoint, Excel and Word. The professional version includes Access in addition to everything already mentioned in the standard version.

Outlook not only helps you manage your e-mail but also has a built-in calendar, address book, journal, notes section and many other useful features. The calendar feature can be extremely helpful for setting up reminders to alert you when you have a meeting with a prospective couple, to return an important phone call or to send a performance appraisal following an event.

PowerPoint has become the standard for creating professional presenta-

More is less.

More features including scratch via the oversize jog wheels, reverse playback, onboard multi-effects, Key Original (master tempo), dedicated 10-second sampler on each controller side, playback of MP3-encoded CDs with pitch bend, change tempo, and scratch play. Plus instant connectivity with our new TT-M1 scratch controller that allows you to control the CD audio and MP3 files with most popular DJ turntables.

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features [Anti-shock memory] [Seamless LOOP] [3 hot start/cue points] [10-Second sampler each controller side] [±8, 16, 32, and 100% pitch control] [Key Original (master tempo)] [Supports CD-R/RW discs] [Supports playback, pitch bend, tempo adjust, and scratch of MP3 encoded discs] [TT-M1 "Turntable Magic" Input] [Reverse playback] [Continuous play, single play, and up to 30 tracks program play] [Automatic BPM count with TAP key] [Digital out] [Brake] [Scratch] [Multi DSP effects syncable to BPM (filter, flange, echo)] [Auto cue] [Fader Start]

Also at your TASCAM DJ dealer: The CD-X1500 Pro Dual CD Player with many of the same great features.

TASCAM DJ

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tions. Many DJs have a PowerPoint presentation they use when meeting with a prospective bride and groom. The program includes an abundance of templates to assist those who are graphically challenged.

Excel and Access are great programs for keeping track of databases and creating spreadsheets. Excel is fine for handling most users' needs while Access has many advanced features for anyone wanting to do more with their databases. Both programs work especially well for handling the large music databases DJs have.

Word is one of the most useful programs in the Microsoft Office Suite—and probably the easiest to use. You can write letters, create fax cover sheets, planners, various forms, flyers and other word processing documents. Word is also a great program to have when you want to do a mass mailing, as the mail merge features can save a lot of time.

Similar programs: Corel Office Suite, StarOffice Suite, Lotus Smart Suite, ACT

Microsoft FrontPage 2003 ($187): Considered to be among the easiest HTML editors around, Microsoft added a ton of new features to the latest edition of FrontPage to combat many of the biggest complaints about the program. The '03 version of FrontPage provides four different views (design, split, code and preview), the ability to add layers, a quick tag editor, and an HTML optimizer to remove unnecessary HTML. This often criticized *WYSIWYG (what you see is* what you get) HTML editor is probably the one piece of Microsoft software that has seen the most improvements over previous versions.

Similar programs: Dreamweaver, GoLive, NetObjects Fusion

TaxAct (Standard: Free; Deluxe: $9.95): Both the standard and deluxe versions include all the forms necessary to file your personal taxes as well as *most of the forms to file as a business.* The deluxe version includes over 110 important tax forms and schedules. Most of the tax programs on the market are pretty similar; the key is to stick with the same program every year so you can import all of your personal information, thus saving you the time of re-typing the same information every year.•

Similar programs: TurboTax, TaxCut

(All prices taken from CDW (www.cdw.com) except for TaxAct, which isn't available in stores.)

Tailor-made Software

For many DJs, a combination of the programs mentioned in this article can help run a DJ business without any other software. However, there are many programs created specifically for DJs that are worth taking a look at to help increase productivity while decreasing workload.

DJ Business Administration:

DJ Calendar: www.djcalendar.com
DJ Manager: www.djmgr.com
DJSoft: www.djsoftinc.com
Infomanager: www.cwarenet.com

Web-based Business Tools:

DJ Intelligence: www.djintelligence.com
DJWebmin: www.djwebmin.com
Realtime: www.realtimedj.com

Music Database Software:

CATraxx: www.fnprg.com/catraxx
CD Trustee: www.base40.com
Music Collector: www.collectorz.com/music
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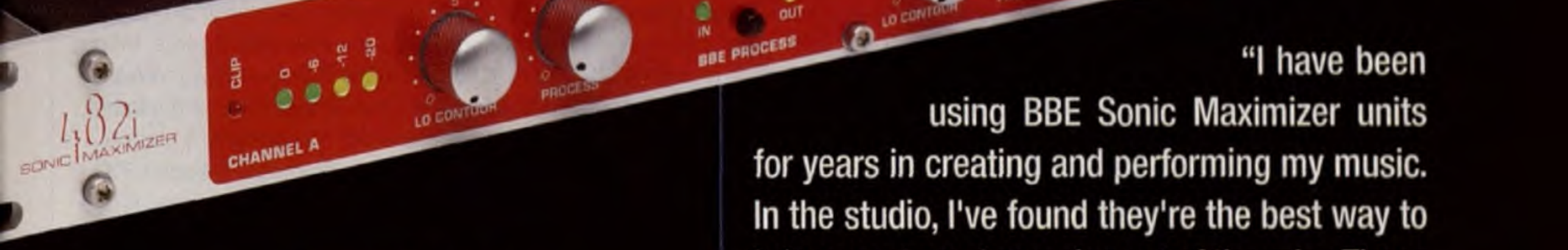

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Image IS EVERYTHING

Have you ever considered dressing your show in the audio equivalent of a flashy tux?

By DJ Dr. Drax

Over time, when I have been asked about the clothes I wear and the origins of my DJ name and persona, I simply respond that in entertainment, IMAGE IS EVERYTHING. Creating a unique image is an often-overlooked aspect of being a mobile entertainer. You can use many tools to create or help bolster that image.

What About Your Audio Image?

To that end, let's talk about increasing the impact of your image through the use of "liners" and "drops." For the uninitiated, these are bits of music, sound effects, snippets of film or TV banter, or other audio creations that can be used as backgrounds to talk over (liners), or to drop in between songs and announcements. When used effectively, these tools can add color and professional flash to your show, while giving you and your audience a more varied vocal/aural experience.

I exclusively use drops from a company called **A Sound Image (www.asoundimage.com, 480-682-9077)**. It is owned and operated by Greg DeAngelo, or DJ Greggy D as his friends call him, a professional radio DJ in Phoenix, Arizona. I consider A Sound Image drops the best in the country. They are nothing short of fabulous.

A Sound Image produces a wide array of drops and supports called *The Show Enhancer Series*. It is now up to volume 13, with number 14 about to drop sometime soon. These artfully crafted drops are very useful in transitioning the dance floor. When moving from a driving rock set to a slow set, a drop is the perfect way to make that transition without awkward silence or trying to mix two tracks that are more than 60 beats apart.

Openers are just that—clever ways to open your show. While not practical for weddings in all cases, they work very well for corporate events and school events. Closers are a nice way to end your show or say good night. They help you end the event without the awkwardness of having to say, "The show's over—go home." While I still do my own closers some of the time, these audio clips provide other options when you want to do something different.

Transition beats are loops that shift from one BPM to another. This is very useful in mixing tracks that are not chromatically easy to match. Use your master tempo control to raise or lower the beats as needed.

Name Recognition

My personal favorites are A Sound Image's "Juicy Drops." I love using the "Back To..." selections, found on a number of discs—radio-ish announcements like "taking you back to the '80s," "taking you back to 1997" or "back in the day double play." I like using these as a way to add more style and color to a show. They also give a broader vocal feel and energy to my show, while at the same time raising the perceived level of my professionalism in the minds of clients and guests. Having heard it already on the radio, they identify this kind of sound augmentation with professional DJs. Each custom drop is personalized with either your DJ name or your company name giving you just the right image enhancement.

For teen and college events, it doesn't hurt for the audience to hear major artists' voices dropped in, not to mention that one of the voice talents at A Sound Image is also the voice of KISS-FM nationwide. This second fact alone gains you some credibility in the minds of the teen and college crowds. I have frequently been asked if I work for the radio station. They think that is how I must have gotten those personalized custom drops made—because they recognize the voice as major on-air talent.

Pump Up the Volumes

Each *Show Enhancer* disc typically comes with over 50 drops, most often close to 90, many customized with your DJ name or company name inserted. There are openers, closers, intros, and personality drops. If you go to the A Sound Image Web site, you can listen to demos of most of the material available.

Volume 13 includes the following: 11 openers, 4 closers, 28 vocal drops, 18 "Juicy Drops," 5 Latin drops, 5 sound FX, 11 sound bites, 5 transition beats, and 7 karaoke drops. While I am not a big fan of karaoke, it does make it fun to use the "Simon Diss" from time to time if you do an American Idol style of KJ show. This has been a big hit. The audience responds with votes, then Simon either disses or praises. Kind of makes it fun to KJ again.

Volume 14 is due to be released very soon. I can't wait to see the great material that it will provide. Each disc thus far has offered something different that I have been able to use. Through the artful use of the *Show Enhancers*, your show can be even more unique. I will say that some of the drops are not suitable for all audiences, but the majority should fit right into any mobile entertainer's show.

A Sound Image can also produce custom radio commercials for you as well. They have produced all of my commercials, which have been very successful. They are of the highest quality available.

I am sure that you will find that the products from A Sound Image will enhance your shows, just as they have mine. Along with my visual image, they have helped me create the enhanced audio image that I have been looking for. •

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*

DJs Win Big

Mobile Beat DJ Show hits the jackpot!

DJs from all over, including jocks from as far away as England and South Africa, came to the 2004 Mobile Beat Winter DJ Show & Conference (Feb. 17-19) looking to *increase their business, try out the latest gear, and better their* performance skills...And they hit the jackpot at the Tropicana Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. While the odds of winning big at the blackjack tables remained the same as always, attendees at the premier show for working DJs came away radiating that winner's glow after experiencing the show's latest triumphant mix of stimulating seminars, new products, killer parties, networking opportunities, and incredible gear giveaways.

Time to Get in Gear

Packed seminars in the Trop's huge ballroom and furious buying activity on the tradeshow floor were clear indicators of this essential *DJ* event's smashing success. The seminar schedule had been tweaked to allow even more time for DJs to check out the "goods" on the exhibit floor than at previous shows—while still providing a full slate of info-packed seminars. The move worked superbly, as attendees reported having ample time to enjoy both education and gear acquisition. Many exhibitors reported (with hoarse voices) barely being able to keep up with the flow of DJs in buying mode.

All the Right Moves

The seminar schedule included its usual tasty mix of info—a flavor for every kind of DJ—along with some especially cutting-edge sessions. DJs got answers about the controversial issue of music downloading directly from John Langley of the RIAA. (Get a taste of the session's provocative info on page 45.) Performance powerhouse Todd Mitchem brought humor and excitement to the room as he demonstrated techniques DJs can use to achieve their absolute best as interactive entertainers. In other segments, worth-elevating tips came from Randy Bartlett and ADJA President Peter Merry; Steve Moore explained a DJ's many roles; the relationship between music theory to good mixing was unveiled by Mike Ryan; the Game Master, Scott Faver, shared a fresh set of interactive ideas; Geoff Ronning discussed adding stage hypnosis to a DJ show; Dr. Drax and Jon Novick covered technology essentials; Mike Ficher got a new generation out of their seats to learn dances from the '60s;

All Photography by Mobile Beat Staff except * by Todd Olson

in Las Vegas!

and even DJ fitness was covered by Ron Waterfield.

Special workshops focused on specific areas like multi-op management challenges, working in clubs, karaoke hosting and technology, and computer DJing. A number of companies sponsored hands-on, product-oriented sessions.

DJs got a chance to experience new interactive ideas at the DJ All Stars show, which once again provided a stage for performers from across the country to demonstrate their creativity. Some attendees stayed on the dance floor all night, absorbing all the new moves and games, while others kept their cameras rolling, wanting to take home every new idea they could carry.

Double the Pleasure

The Mobile Beat Vegas event is always the place where DJs can let their hair down and party the way they don't get to the rest of the year. This time around, they had two huge parties to keep their groove things shakin' on the second night of the show. American DJ kicked out the jams at their latest Customer Appreciation Party at The Beach. Promo Only and Pioneer Electronics put on a major bash at New York, New York's Studio 54 to demo the wonders of DVD mixing.

A tradition of incredible product giveaways has developed at the Mobile Beat Shows over the last few years. The 2004 Vegas version replicated itself, becoming two tremendous collections of gear from a host of suppliers. (See page 84 for a complete list.) Carol Marshall of Music One in Benicia, California took home the Sensational DJ System, and the Mobile Power-Packed Performance System went to another Californian, Victor Harris of DJ-K Productions in San Leandro.

A unique opportunity at the show was an exclusive preview screening of *LA DJ: The Movie*, which followed the pre-show, karaoke-focused Welcome Party. A new show feature, the Cyber Café, was sponsored by ProDJ.com and Promo Only. Computers and wireless Internet access allowed attendees to get their daily fix of e-mail and Web surfing.

And the #1 show rumor? That would be the fate of the Tropicana Hotel itself—and the location of the 2005 Mobile Beat Las Vegas show. Watch for that announcement coming soon!

Don't miss the next Mobile Beat experience—register for the Summer Mobile Beat DJ Show and Conference at the Radisson Universal in Orlando, Florida, June 28-30, 2004. See page 82, go to www.mobilebeat.com or call 585-385-9920 for information.

By Tony Barthel

Straight from the Show: So Many Reasons to Go

While the Mobile Beat Conference is a celebration for all, Chivella Rogers from TMC Productions in Inverness, Florida had something very special to celebrate—her 21st birthday. On the first day of the conference, a huge audience serenaded Chivella, in honor of her becoming "legal." When Chivella was just a toddler, her employer, Chris Moling, started the company she now works for. This year the two decided to "see what's new and what's happening" according to Chris. "We had a great time! Mobile Beat—that's the way to go!" said Chivella of the experience.

Some people go out of their way to come to the Mobile Beat Show, but Mike and Karen Landi came from way out of their way—South Africa. They run the largest DJ company in their country, Shattered Glass Discos, with 18 systems in Johannesburg and another four in western S.A. They wondered how relevant the information would be to them. They found that, in many ways, we do things alike. Still, they came to "learn, learn, learn" as Karen said. Fortunately, they were able to get in a bit of fun as well. Mike's interest was particularly in marketing and they found the presentations valuable. Oddly enough, they found a lot of people at the show had funny accents. How could Mobile Beat improve the conference? "Hold it in South Africa!" said the Landis. OK folks, get your plane tickets, your passports and prepare for a 19-hour plane ride...then again, maybe not.

On the other end of the travel spectrum was Brian Alexander who came all the way from, well, Vegas. While many DJs view the show as a way to improve their existing companies, Brian was actually in the process of starting a company. He was looking for pointers, tips and gear. Not that he doesn't have gear now—he says he's got a garage-full—but he's looking for more. Brian is not totally inexperienced in the DJ profession, as he used to spin in European clubs. Right now, he's just weighing his options for starting a part-time DJ business. Oh, and did we mention buying more gear? Shhh...don't tell his wife about the gear, okay?

One of the presenters at the show this year was Jorge Lopez. He owns J&M Entertainment and is considered by many to be a leader in the Southern California market. Still, Jorge indicated that he learned quite a bit at the conference and does every year. "I thought the seminars were better than any in recent memory," said the successful business owner. He emphasized that multi-system operators should bring their DJs. "You'll gain something—but so will your employees. It will also help build camaraderie. The conference helps you see how things are done at other companies but also helps you feel really great about yourself."

We Americans have many misconceptions about Canada, eh? For example, I wasn't aware that country music was the "savior" of the country, but according to Jim and Brenda Wilson of Twilight Zone Music in Grandview, Manitoba, it is—and that's why they appreciated the country music workshop. They enjoyed being on the other side of the DJ booth for a change, especially having a blast at The Beach and Studio 54 parties. "The mood is great and we also appreciate the food," said the couple, mentioning the complimentary, tasty fare available at many show events. Attendees get more than just "food for thought."

DJs do a variety of things while at the Mobile Beat DJ Show—take in seminars, renew old acquaintances, party, gamble—but Professor Danny of Prime Time Entertainment took the prize when he said he got married during the conference. That's right, he and his lovely bride entered the final frontier on the bridge on the USS Enterprise. And speaking of bonding, Danny also valued the fellowship at the show, noting, "When you're out there, there's a bit of a competitive nature but [at MB Vegas] all that goes by the wayside... It's like gears that are spinning in opposite directions coming together to make a smooth-running machine." Uh, Danny, for gears to work together, they have to spin in opposite directions. We'll forgive you—you're on your honeymoon.

Mark Ashe and Sandy Baker work together...apart. Their company, Ultimate Experiences, has operations in New York and Massachusetts. In Las Vegas, they can compare notes with each other while also swapping stories with other DJ professionals. "It gets better every year," said Ashe. He particularly liked the show floor but also noted, "If you get one little thing out of one of the seminars, you've got your money's worth."

If you listen to weird late-night radio, you might be familiar with talk show host Art Bell. Bell hails from a trailer in Pahrump, Nevada—a small town where all sorts of interesting things are legal. Art's not the only character in the oddly named town. We got to speak with another denizen of Pahrump, Jim Gallagher, who was in Vegas looking at all the goodies in the tradeshow exhibit hall. He was particularly intrigued by the flat-panel speakers. No, Jim, as far as we know, they're not based on extraterrestrial technology.

Behind the Music with the RIAA

By DJ Dr. Drax

A frank discussion of copyright realities in the new millennium

At the 2004 Mobile Beat Las Vegas show, I hosted a seminar session that was held to discuss copyright issues as they relate to DJs, with John Langley of the RIAA (Recording Industry Association of America). It was a unique opportunity to clear away some of the continuing misconceptions about intellectual property rights that have been stirred up anew in this age of easy MP3 downloading, storage and playback.

Langley is the Senior Operations Supervisor Agent over the western region of the U.S. He has been with the RIAA for over 20 years and has seen the growth of the organization firsthand. Previously with the Canadian Royal Mounted Police for 17 years, he was instrumental in the development of the current AVLA license for DJs in Canada.

Copyright Basics 101

After a brief introduction, Langley presented some copyright essentials that every DJ needs to know:

- Piracy is THEFT! Only 8% of all CDs break even, only 6% make money.
- Every year, the recording industry's piracy losses are $350 million in the U.S. and almost $3 billion worldwide. The industry is down 33%, due mostly to piratical activities, much of it online. For example, illegal CDs of Jay-Z's *The Black Album* were easily available on the streets of Los Angeles three weeks before it was released to the public.
- Who does piracy really hurt? All of us. We are all in the music industry. When you steal music you hurt yourself. Because of the nature of how our industry works—for instance, the fact that pool services can't satisfy all our needs, such as older, classic party music—we must buy retail CDs.

Watching the Commercials

The main issues revolve around commercial gain:

1) *Direct Commercial Gain* – This would be where you are actively selling musical recordings. It includes selling duplicated CDs or CDRs, as well as selling hard drives with recordings on them. These are illegal activities. Period.

2) *Indirect Commercial Gain* – An example would be if you were creating CDs for clients or guests and giving them away as "CD favors." This is a clearly illegal activity and should NOT be engaged in, in any fashion. Even if you are not selling them, the benefit derived from using these CDs as an enticement to book your services *is* indirect commercial gain. The same concept applies to DJ "mix CDs"— you cannot sell them or give them away to promote your services or talents.

The Lowdown on Downloads

From the RIAA's perspective, download services such as Kazaa, Bearshare and other P2P (peer-to-peer) filesharing services are illegal. While the legality of the actual services is yet to be decided by the courts, NOTHING can be done to make the sharing of unauthorized materials legal.

Quite a lot of media attention has been directed at the 12-year-old girl who was sued by the "big, nasty" RIAA. Here are the facts: She had almost 11,000 tracks on her computer AND her system was also online 24/7, with all those files available for download by P2P users. Her computer had logged over 28,000 tracks downloaded by others from her hard drive. Was she a knowing infringer? Yes. Did she know that she was vending 28,000 files? Probably not. But ignorance is no excuse in the eyes of the law.

Do the math. The lost revenue would have paid artists, producers, engineers, secretaries, and many others who work in the music industry as a whole. If you download illegal tracks from an illegal source you have a problem. They are illegal and always will be. If you use these in your business you have a problem.

Most people found to have illegal recordings will receive a "cease and desist" letter before any other actions are taken. Correcting the situation and removing the offending materials from your possession will generally result in no further action.

Direct Access

The following are excerpts taken directly from the seminar, where John Langley answered some essential DJ questions about copyright issues.

Q: Is it illegal to buy music from the pay-per-download services?
A: No, as long as the source material is legitimate and there is no serial duplication—and as long as you can demonstrate that you have done your best to pay a royalty and comply with the law.

Q: Can I convert my legimate CDs to MP3s?
A: As long as there is no serial duplication,* you should have no problems.

[Editor's note: serial duplication refers to making multiple copies of a file to use on multiple systems.]

Q: Can I convert or compile my CDs down to CDRs to reduce the volume of CDs I carry to an event?
A: Again, as long as you retain possession of the source material and there is no serial duplication, you should have no problems.

Q: Has any event ever been stopped and the DJ arrested for using illegal music?
A: No. Claims to the contrary are just not credible and should not be believed or listened to.

Q: A DJ has been in business a long time. He has a library that he has converted and has also purchased several hundred tracks. He has sold his DJ business with MP3s but has kept the originals from which the MP3s were made. Is this legal?
A: No. When you sell a computer system, I suggest that you erase the hard drive. That, or make sure that you have supplied all the original source recordings from which the MP3s have been made. This would mean a complete chain of custody transfer, to the new owner, of those original recordings.

Q: A number of companies have come forward with services offering to sell you hard drives with MP3s on them, based upon signing an affidavit that you have the originals. Is this legal?
A: Not a good practice. Those doing this are taking large risks, since anyone can sign an affidavit stating anything. Without proof, the risks are large and not worth it.

Q: There are also services that will provide MP3 conversion services for you, if you send your CDs. Is this legal?
A: I feel that it is a very risky proposition. It is a very gray area. They have a commercial gain from the transference of sound recordings. That is an issue.
The main issue is loss of your chain of custody over your CDs. This gives you exposure. You should maintain direct control over your original libraries.

Q: There are companies around the country that are circulating letters to venues telling them that they could be sued for the actions of a DJ using MP3s and CDRs. Do the venues have any liability?
A: No, they do not. They are welcome to contact me at the RIAA. I will tell them that they have no exposure.

Q: Do you feel the RIAA has used heavy-handed tactics in seeking data about people downloading off the web, using loopholes in the DMCA?
A: There are no loopholes in the DMCA. These are the tools that are there for us to do our jobs and protect the property rights of our members.

Music Rights—Listen and Learn

Hear the candid discussion with John Langley in its entirety on the tape, "Music Rights in the New Digital Age"—the latest addition to Mobile Beat's Ultimate Instructional Library, tape #90. Turn to page 85 for ordering information.

Q: Do you feel the slide in CD sales is due to the popularity of online download sites or to the general lackluster quality of music being released?
A: Both. The issue comes back to how few CDs actually break even, let alone make money. The labels are not going to invest $600,000 to put a CD on the market that will only have a 2% chance of being profitable, knowing that it will be pirated. They are not spending the money in artist development that was once spent.

Q: Do you feel the RIAA Amnesty policy, called "Clean Slate" (www.riaa.com/pdf/cleanSlateDesc.pdf) will protect someone from a 3rd party?
A: The issue is that it doesn't protect you from a 3rd party action.

Q: I have an ASCAP license. Will this allow me to make CD recordings for sale or use in the promotion of my business?
A: No. ASCAP only covers and compensates the songwriters and composers for the public performance of their works. It does not entitle you to make derivative recordings for sale.

Q: How can DJs get out of the gray area of music use?
A: Don't steal. Don't use piratical materials. Have original source materials. As long as you have original source materials you should not have a problem. We are not here to make your job difficult, or to restrain you from using the technologies that we know you will use anyway. Our job is to work with you, to encourage DJs to always obtain their music from legal sources. •

For further information you may contact John Langley at jlangley@riaa.com. To report someone breaking the law, call 1-800-BAD-BEAT. You can find the online text or PDF versions of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (H.R. 2281 or Public Law 105-304) at http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/publaw/105publ.html.

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Selecting the Right DJ Applicant

An excerpt from The Secret to a Successful Reputation

By J. Matt Martindale

This carefully written book is designed to help you assess the financial worth of your reputation as a professional DJ or entertainer—and to explain why it really matters. Did you know that the loss of one upset client might cost you over $19,000? You'll also learn the 9 key places to find new DJ staff, 11 essential guidelines for interviewing, and 13 "red flags" to watch for. Overall, it is meant to show you how to maximize your return on marketing. The book includes sample questions, profiles, forms, checklists, and more, to provoke thought and activity. See the note at the end of this excerpt for more on ProDJ Publishing.

Selecting a DJ Applicant

Being fair with hiring decisions requires ultimate wisdom. These decisions reveal your company's values and securely reinforce your reputation.

> *Effective leadership is not based on being clever, it is based on being consistent.*
> – John C. Maxwell

Methodically review every reason you're hiring an additional DJ and weigh it against the cost of time spent in interviewing, training, and supervising. Consider the monies paid out in payroll taxes, workman's comp, unemployment, salary, and other tangible company resources. These are all real costs of hiring.

After a DJ position is posted, let's hypothetically say that you're about to answer over 60 telephone inquiries from that posting. The first one is on the phone right now, and his name is Johnny Smith. What do you do?

Screening DJ Applicant Responses

You need to develop your own process to sift through all these upcoming responses and start pre-qualifying the respondents. You can learn a lot on the phone if you use that as your first tool. With each telephone inquiry, be sure to provide just enough general information about some job requirements, and pre-qualify your applicant immediately. To help pre-qualify, consider these sample questions:

Telephone Interview Sample Questions

1) Tell me a little bit about yourself, what you're doing now and about your current or most recent position?

Why ask this question? It's a broad-brush, easy opening question to make the respondent comfortable. Just be sure to take good notes on the responses.

2) Why are you looking to work here as a professional DJ entertainer?

Why ask this question? It will give you some insight about their inner motivations and what inspires them. You can determine "what makes Johnny tick" now, and continually measure it against his actions in the future. So take good notes. For example, Johnny said while he's in college, he wants some experience performing in front of crowds because he eventually wants to perform on Broadway. If you decide to hire Johnny, remember that Broadway is his goal. Help develop his skills so that he achieves what will meet his inner motivations.

3) What do you think you'll be doing here while working for my company?

Why ask this question? Find out first what Johnny *really* thinks being a professional mobile DJ is like. Take detailed notes, let Johnny finish speaking, then professionally correct him if he's misinformed.

4) What previous experience do you have that you feel qualifies you for this position?

Why ask this question? This question is a good natural follow-up to the previous question. Make sure Johnny *really* understands which roles he will serve.

Be fair and honest with the applicant up front. Tell him how long it will take to become fully trained. Ask him if he's committed to developing into a successful DJ. Give him an HONEST salary base without tips. Disclose that tips are at the client's discretion and not policy nor an expectation. Briefly describe your overtime policy. Do NOT misrepresent that tips are assured, guaranteed or expected. Inform him of any driving requirements and when the work will be performed. Describe the true work environment and hours. Remind Johnny that you are selecting only one key DJ to be part of your growing business and to proudly represent your name. Then, let him take the next step…

He'll either ask for the position, or inform you he's not interested. If he is still interested, conclude by giving Johnny a "homework" assignment. For example, if you have a Web site, tell him to visit it. Ask him to carefully study its content and learn as much as he can about your company. Also ask Johnny to evaluate what he thinks your company's reputation means to the community that books you.

Finally, request that he send you a one page cover letter and resume. If he is unable to do so for some reason, then send him an application.

(NOTE: You can mail out an application or have an applicant pick it up in person. Personally, I always mail out applications to potential applicants; especially

from any classified listings or general postings listed...I have chosen to always mail out the application because of a tragic event that happened to a friend in 1999. A fellow DJ and friend whom I knew as a child was shot to death in Colorado, then robbed when a classified ad respondent came to his house for audio gear. By allowing an applicant to pick up an application in person, he knows where your office is and can quickly evaluate the security of your gear *before* being employed by you. You need to evaluate if this is a risk you're willing to accept. Personally, I suggest mailing the application out because you never know who the person responding is, their character, or their true motives.)

Telephone Inquiry Questions Exercise

Write a few of your own telephone screening questions to ask:

Telephone Question: _____

_____

Why? _____

_____

Additional Homework with the Application

Throughout the application process, it is very useful to continually give Johnny homework. By doing so, you will determine his depth as a candidate, and the seriousness of his commitment to your company. Homework also serves as an honest evaluation of his ability to prepare. Throughout the process, give homework because it is an effective method to screen out lazy or indifferent applicants. Below are some sample questions DJ owners have used:

- Are you capable of safely lifting 75 lbs. at least shoulder height?
- List at least two artists in each category of music:

  Alternative / Big Band / Swing / Country / Disco / Jazz Motown / Rock / Top 40 / '50s / '60s / '80s / '90s
- Why is this DJ position important to you? (Leave room for a small paragraph response.)
- Why should I hire you? (Leave room for a small paragraph response.)

Though this application homework might serve some companies well, methodically think of at least four of your own questions that test music knowledge and overall commitment to your company.

Application Question: _____

_____

Why? _____

_____

Believe it or not, this small step weeds out roughly 60 percent of the applicants who request the next step simply because of unwillingness to do homework. This shows their commitment.

Next, require that the application and homework be due within ten days of Johnny's call. He can either mail or fax it back to be received within the ten-day window of opportunity.

Once Johnny sends back his application and homework, review everything in teams to help evaluate his skills, abilities, education and experience. For example, my wife and I co-reviewed Johnny's application and homework to mutually assess his potential within the company and the reputation we valued.

Johnny now follows up by phone a few days later and asks the next step. I tell him, "Johnny, I'm not going to tell you what to wear to the interview, but I want you to dress however you think a DJ would dress if he were performing at a wedding reception." I leave it at that. This has been good for a few good laughs over the years, seeing everything from jeans or shorts to a very nicely pressed suit.

I remember my senior year at Colorado State University, starting the job hunt. It was February, and during career week. Large companies and organizations would come to campus and post openings, solicit resumes, then schedule teams of three on an interview panel. From an applicant standpoint, this experience was simply terrifying.

Two or three heads are better than one. My wife and I would frequently in-

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terview potential candidates together. It was almost like a police movie interrogation with me primarily being the "bad" cop and the clear facilitator. I would primarily ask the questions and make detailed notes, and she'd occasionally interject a few spontaneous questions to help the applicant further clarify responses. After the interview, we were able to compare notes and impressions, save time and help spread the risk of perhaps making a poor hiring decision. In the end, it was very, very successful.

Red Flags to Watch For in an Interview

After numerous interviews, I began to spot certain common red flags. Ron Fry, in his book *101 Great Answers to the Toughest Interview Questions*, also lists several red flags to look for:

1) Late for the interview
2) Poorly groomed
3) Asks the wrong questions
4) Dishonest
5) Cannot remain focused
6) Repeatedly avoids eye contact
7) Negative remarks regarding past co-workers or employer
8) Quick to take credit for successes while avoiding the responsibility for past failures, or poor results
9) Lying
10) Lack of enthusiasm or interest
11) Does not answer the question
12) Defensive for no particular reason
13) Modified or exaggerated responses to interview questions that conflict with resume or application.

Though these are initial and obvious red flags, they should not be considered automatic reasons for dismissal of Johnny if he exhibits one. However, if Johnny accumulates more than two red flags, carefully evaluate how his employment with you may ultimately affect your reputation.•

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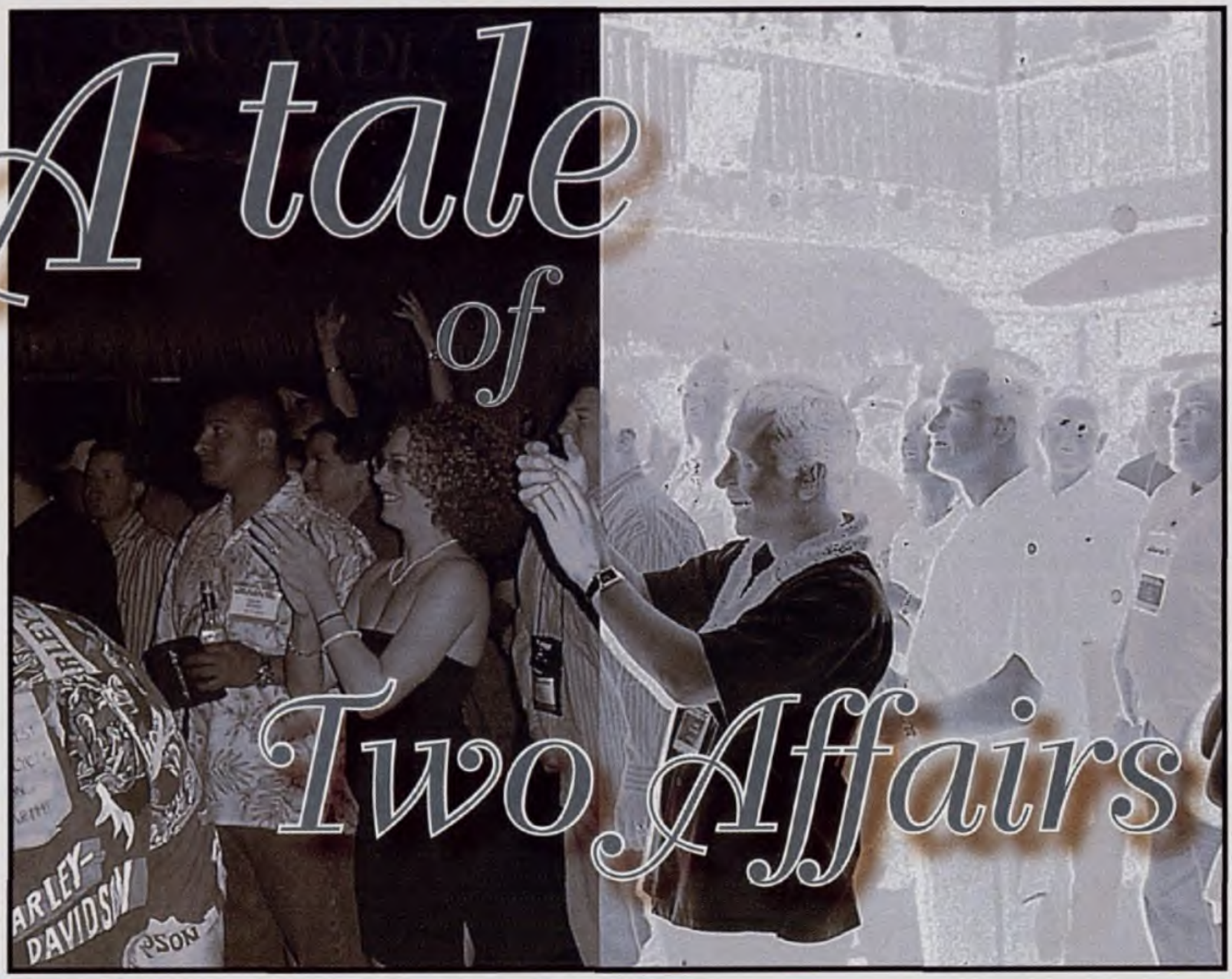
A tale of Two Affairs



Exploring skewed client thinking on booking different events with the same DJ

second of two articles on DJ pricing strategies

By Mark Johnson

Why does a mother not think twice about the $400 price tag of a four-hour Sweet 16 performance for her teenager, yet balk when offered the same price for a similar evening's worth of DJ expertise for an adult party at a later date?

I had just concluded such a Sweet 16 party and that mother asked if I could perform for an upcoming party. Having my foot already in the door and not needing to "sell myself," I said, "Sure, and I'll charge you the same price."

All of a sudden, the amount appeared too high. It didn't seem high when she was booking me for her daughter's party of 25-30 teenagers with the requisite rental room, catering, decorations, etc. But $400 was now too high for her upcoming adult party.

She offered some rationale for her opinion. She said that there would only be 10-20 couples at this event and that they would be paying roughly $40 per couple. After spending for the facility, food and drinks, there would not be $400 left over for the DJ. She asked me to lower my price, which I did (by $100) to accommodate the opportunity.

A tale of Two Affairs

If you alter the price for one party, have you set an unfortunate precedent for any future events?

Multiple Methods of Counting the Cost

Here's the rub. Parties seem to fall into two major categories. The first category covers weddings, Sweet 16s and other family events with Mom and/or Dad picking up the tab for the entire affair. Sure, they will be price-conscious regarding each element, i.e., location, food, decorations and entertainment. But they won't worry about the number of guests unless it changes drastically from their original estimate.

The second category includes the aforementioned adult party, school dances and other "admission price" or "head count" events. Clearly, school dances are the most price-specific, as they divide the cost of the DJ, food and security against the expected attendance and come up with an admission price. Over the years, organizers can make some assumptions, for example, charging $5 a person should net 200-250 students, and that there will be some money left over for the sponsoring organization after subtracting the costs.

For adult admission parties, the attendance factor functions differently. These parties will not have 100 couples paying $30 each, thus generating a large gross income from which to pay the party's expenses. The smaller head count directly affects both the cost per couple and eventually the price the DJ may charge.

My multi-event client underestimated the price that these adult couples would be willing to pay. I know that if I go out with my wife to a nice restaurant, I typically plan to spend $60-75 for a decent dinner and a few drinks. Considering the fact that this customer was renting a room for four hours, with a dinner and a small open bar, $40 per couple would have consumed virtually all the money—just for those items.

Truth and Consequences

Putting yourself in the situation I have described, you might consider the fact that you didn't have to "sell yourself" to this person for the second party, since they were already familiar with you. You could rationalize a price break based on the decrease in advertising money you had to spend to get the booking. But that's the whole purpose of referrals anyway: keeping the real advertising dollars.

There are a few other issues regarding this situation. First, if you alter the price for this adult party, have you set an unfortunate precedent for any future events? Let's say she has another daughter who will get a Sweet 16 party next year. Do you go back to $400 for that party or are you now stuck at the $300 level you charged for the adult party?

Do you try to illustrate that performing for a Sweet 16 party is "harder" than for an adult party, with all the extra activities and more focused attention to the music? That's a hard sell, as it still is the same time period for your services. (Unless you have add-ons like inflatables or other party favors included in your $400 price.)

If that parent does book me for the second Sweet 16 party and wrestles me to the lower price from the adult party, I will still provide the same level of entertainment I would have provided, had I gotten my regular price. I would not want to make my performance based totally on price alone.

What Are You Really Worth?

On another note, I've even had a situation like this: I'm performing at an event; someone takes my card and calls me later. They tell me that they're planning their own event and they've boiled it down to me and another guy. They tell me that they like me better but the other guy is charging a lower price than I would and they want me to meet or beat that price.

Hmmm. You like me better but not so much better that you'll pay my price. What if Mr. Second Place DJ charged half of what I charge? Should I go down to that level? Should I elaborate on the differences between the two of us that may justify my price? Could the client really care about all that and still remain extremely price conscious?

This reminds me of new car commercials. Best Selection, Best Service, Lowest Prices. Is it real or just a gimmick?

Perhaps there's something in the air, economy-wise, that in today's stagnant market, the client knows that they can look for a reduced price and we will take their booking. And I have to agree with them. I would rather make $300 for a performance than $0 for staying home. If I were over-booked, then I could hold my prices and wait for the next client that will pay my price. But in the slower periods during the year, holding my breath for the best bookings often results in $0 for some weekends. Unlike DJs who focus on maintaining their higher prices by selling the sizzle and not the steak, perhaps I'm in the middle tier of DJs who don't get clients who can be persuaded in that fashion. •

FINE-TUNING VS. PRICE-FIXING

Another note about pricing: Maintaining different prices for different events is perfectly legal. Unless you advertise your prices, you can learn about your customer beforehand, determine a comfortable amount, and go from there. Price-fixing only occurs when you collude with the other DJs in your area to keep prices at a certain level. According to the dictionary, it is "the result of an unlawful agreement between manufacturers or dealers to set and maintain specified prices on typically competing products" (*The American Heritage® Dictionary, 4th Ed.*, 2000, Houghton Mifflin).

By Mike Ficher

Like their current counterparts in radio, Mobile DJs must cater to the crowd more than creative programming impulses

WHAT WE DO

At a wedding reception, if I strictly play contemporary music, showcasing the hippest tracks in the digital stack of wax or a forgotten nugget or two, I might please a few trendy audience members and educate a few others. But, Mom and Dad, who may have paid for the affair, and Uncle Ernie and Aunt Helen, who love to swing and foxtrot, may not be too thrilled with my selections.

At a corporate promotion, if the event appeals to a certain audience type or offers a specific theme, my programming should support that goal. Otherwise, they may not think of me *when contemplating an entertainment service* provider in the future because I was unable to support their vision.

The point is, my job involves employing the guidelines that are presented, and attempting to craft an audience-pleasing audio atmosphere to help realize my client's event goals, whether it's a disco inferno, a pleasant ambient affair or a well-rounded dance event.

Isn't that what radio is trying to achieve?

COOL LIKE THAT

A former program director at a San Francisco-based urban contemporary station once summed up radio's mission: "We are in the business of delivering an audience with certain desirable characteristics to advertisers." Hmmm…nothing about music, personalities or formats in that assessment. And, isn't that what we do, sans the advertising angle and changing "delivering" to "entertaining," as DJs at an event?

Maybe, at one time, radio was more of an artistic endeavor, a forum for creative audio programming. Many may remember or may have heard of the legendary KSAN in San Francisco. No, not the deceased country station from the 1990s, but the freeform FM format pioneered by Tom Donahue in the late '60s. Highly influential—but gone by 1980.

Fewer will remember KKCY. In the late 1980s, when Jim Gabbert bought "The City," the latter-day stepson of KSAN, a contentious group

Most perceptive listeners would agree that the current artistic state of mainstream metropolitan radio falls somewhere between drive-in movies and recycled sitcoms. Even a candid program director or two might, in an enlightened moment, confess to such an observation.

But, as a mobile disc jockey, while my idyllic side may twitch at the absence of creative programming and challenging formats, are we—and is radio—in the business of pushing the artistic envelope with fresh new songs, unknown artists and overlooked classics? Or, do we bear a responsibility to satisfy our respective audiences regardless of our feelings about the quality of their tastes?

of devoted listeners finagled a deal to retain creative programming input for the station. Anxious to purchase the station, Gabbert avoided a protracted license renewal fight with the well-connected group and approved a deal to hire Donahue to help program the station. Reportedly, within five hours of the station's new programming switch, Gabbert was on the phone accusing the legendary radio personality of "ruining his station." Or words to that effect.

Recently, in the Bay Area, "The Wave," a relatively adventurous mix of rhythm and blues, soul, reggae, contemporary and pop, ran aground and changed to fashionable soft rock after only a year-and-a-half on the air.

Sound familiar from the DJ front?

DOWN THE MIDDLE

Unfortunately, the success rate of free-form, artistic, groundbreaking radio stations is spotty, at best. Look at the top radio stations in most markets—news, talk, adult pop, urban contemporary, oldies. Not a whole lot of support for artistic venture or mixed formats.

And, frankly, at the inflated prices buyers tuned in for radio stations during the last couple of decades, if a freeform format was perceived to capture the market, I suspect any programming director or station owner would be rushing to put it on the air.

In our profession, do you sense a similar reaction?

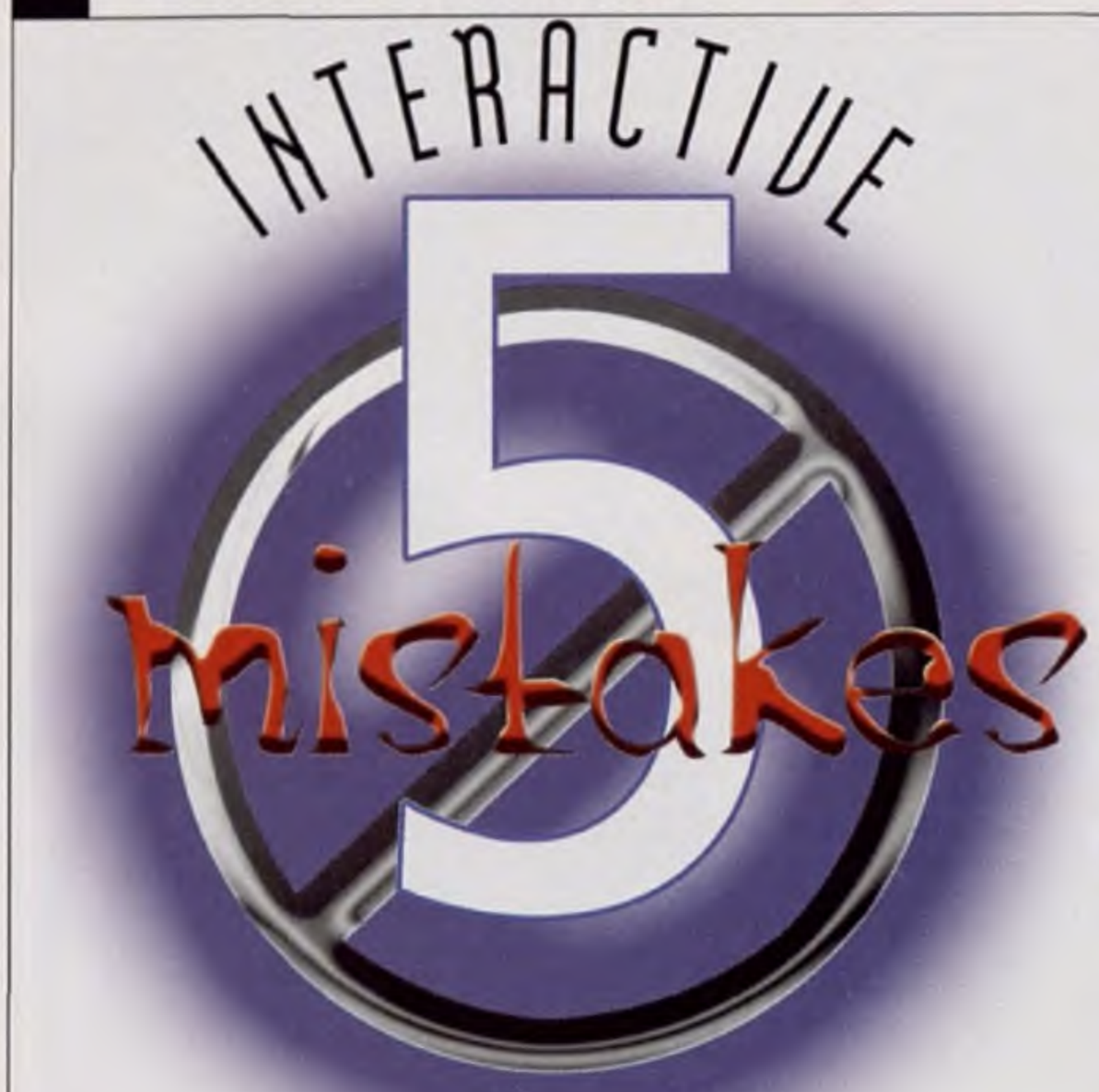
SAME BALL OF WAX

Peruse the annual *Mobile Beat* Top 200. It bears a striking resemblance each year, doesn't it? While current flavors-of-the-month infiltrate the venerable survey, songs such as "YMCA," "Old Time Rock 'n' Roll," "Electric Boogie" and "Celebration" regularly populate the upper regions of the list—and for good reason. More often than not, that's what our clients want to hear and what they respond to. The advantage mobile entertainers enjoy versus radio is the opportunity to put a different spin or distinctive visual or interactive experience with the song to freshen the tune.

One Bay Area mobile jock jests that he could play most gigs with about 15 well-selected CDs. In the current environment, for many events, he is probably accurate. If we examined many DJs' event playlists, a striking similarity would likely emerge.

Is it good? Is it bad? It just is. In most cases, our selections reflect what our market or audience wants. Should we push the artistic envelope with our music programming? Or play it safe and responsive like our radio brethren?

No one has the perfect answer. For most mobiles, we find a way to balance our creative audio impulses with a client-focused, pragmatic approach for a sensible business strategy. After all, we are in the business of entertaining an audience with certain demographic characteristics. We'll have our moments at an event, but, more likely, we'll only push the aural envelope in the van on the way home from the gig.•



You Are Making Right Now ...and HOW TO FIX THEM

By Todd Mitchem

If you didn't make it to Todd's astonishing seminars at the Mobile Beat Vegas show, here's some of the career-changing info you missed...

Mistakes are a part of life—and performance. I take participants through a gauntlet of interactive challenges in my seminars, and here, for your benefit, are the top five mistakes I've seen DJs make in almost every workshop, as well as at social and corporate events I've attended. Do not be offended if you fall into these categories; just realize that you aren't the only one and that you can change immediately after you're finished reading.

Everyone face me and put your hands up. It is time for the...

Five Interactive Mistakes and How to Fix Them—NOW

MISTAKE #1: Not Understanding What "Interactive" Is All About

"Interactive." What does it mean? If you don't know, then you have chosen the wrong career path. Interactive literally means mutually or reciprocally active. In other words, the interactive relationship must be a give and take. The true nature of interaction and interactive performance is to focus on creating a mutually active relationship between you and the audience. If you are not concentrating on this exchange you are failing as an interactive performer—and that is your biggest mistake.

As I write this, I can already hear the skeptics mumbling, but since when has that stopped me? YES, WE ARE ALL INTERACTIVE! If you spin music, thus engaging the audience with an anticipated result of a packed dance floor, that is interaction. If you talk to the audience and give direction in any way, that is interaction. Now the levels of interaction may differ but my notes are for all of you. I am speaking to you, the DJ who never will perform a YMCA routine and to you, the MC who will perform ten interactive elements at one event. This applies to everyone. Once you understand what being interactive is and that you are doing it, then you can begin to fix the other issues.

MISTAKE #2: Working Against the Audience

Time and time again I hear DJs tell me their audience was too tough or that nothing worked. The hard truth is, there are no bad audiences, only bad MCs and DJs. The problem is that almost all DJs make their event an interactive *battle* between the entertainer and the audience, when in fact it should be a *partnership* between the two. Every audience has buttons and you MUST learn to push the right ones in order to be successful. Here's a two-hundred-fifty-dollar tip: Get to know your audience! Before and during the event, spend time meeting, one-on-one, as many of the audience members as you can. Ask them what they are interested in and lose the thought that you know everything about them already.

When it comes to working with the audience, a couple of rules of thumb that I live by are: We are all just people, and they don't know what I do. The first statement is simple, I know, but often the DJ/MC forgets that people are human and will not go for what you throw at them simply because you do it. Establish that you are not trying to hurt them or embarrass them. Instead, talk to them as if you were talking casually to a friend. I always tell audiences, "This is for fun and I know it looks silly." This breaks down the wall of fear in the room and will let the audience know that you are just a person, like them.

They don't know...Chances are, the majority of the guests are not familiar with the interactive elements that you'll be performing. I know that my father does not practice "YMCA" moves in his office, just in case he has a wedding to go to in the future. Treat your event as if everyone is seeing it for the first time, because it probably is their first time. Since the majority of people are not familiar with all interactive elements, you need to always be ready to do at least a few of the ones you know people will recognize, for example, the interactive routines many DJs hate: The Electric Slide, YMCA, Macarena, Hokey Pokey, and the infamous Chicken Dance. While we may be sick of these elements, the general public loves them. Just try to steer clear of persuading the audience that these interactives are cool. If you show that you realize how goofy these routines are, then the audience will participate. An example I use a great deal is something called the Block of Cheese. This block is three or four of the silliest, most overused routines I can think of, all pack together in one set. I may start by saying, "And now everyone, I was asked to play the silliest songs I could think of and here they are. I call them the Block of Cheese." This comment relays to the audience that I know

what we are about to do is ridiculous. It also gives them permission to relax and join in the hilarity.

3

MISTAKE #3: Not Talking to the Audience
Someone, someday, will need to explain to me why so many DJs and MCs still put on a fake voice. I do not get it and neither does the audience. When you deepen your voice or change it in any way during an event, you are faking it and believe me the audience knows it too. You may think they love it, but you do not realize that many in the seats are so irritated that they are tuning you out. I have actually attended weddings where the DJ's voice was so annoying that guests were complaining to each other and even imitating it.

Here's how to rid yourself of the habit. Begin by changing the way you think about the relationship between you and the audience. Treat it more like a conversation between two friends. (See #2 above.) Then talk to them just like you are talking to friends or anyone else when you are not on stage with a microphone. Next, record yourself performing either by audio or video and listen to your voice. Does it sound like conversation or simply a voice from above speaking to the masses? Another great training exercise to break you of this habit is to practice what you normally say at an event but practice using a whisper. When I have my talent go through this, it is amazing how quickly they adapt. Then gradually bring the volume of your voice up, approaching a normal speaking voice level. As soon as you feel your voice snap into that typical, cheesy, announcer, godlike tone, immediately drop back to the whisper and start all over again. Remember that the microphone and the speakers will do all of the amplification work, so you don't have to.

Once you have controlled your voice fluctuations, you can begin the next phase: talking to them. When you are speaking to the audience just talk to them, looking right at someone. Speak as if you are having a conversation with someone you know. This technique makes your speech flow and sound more natural, which in turn helps the audience easily relate to you.

4

MISTAKE #4: Performing the Routine at the Wrong Time
You know the routine cold. You know how to speak to the audience. And yet that interactive routine will just not work. A great element is worthless if it is placed, or more precisely, forced into the wrong moment at an event. So how do you stop this from happening? First, check the music you've programmed prior to the interactive routine you're about to introduce. If you just played four songs that were all disco and then went into YMCA, you've done it. That flows with the genre of music you've set up. Conversely, if you dealt out four techno dance numbers, then dove into YMCA, you would probably create havoc and potentially destroy the flow. I tell my team to program the interactive musical routine as if it were a part of the selected music. If you made a great routine to the song "Shout," then ask yourself, "Where would I PLAY that song?" Something like "Shout" fits nicely at the end of an oldies set or between two completely different styles of music to use as a transition piece. The simple rule of thumb is if the audience wouldn't dance to that song at that moment then they will most likely not respond to an interactive routine at the same moment either. Don't just insert

an interactive element just because you think it's cool. Creating this cohesiveness between interactive elements and music selection is a science—so think before you play.

5

MISTAKE #5: Abusing the Microphone
Do you remember when your parents told you if you don't have anything nice to say that you shouldn't say anything at all? A similar rule applies to all events and entertainment.

At one large club I worked in, the DJs and MCs would ramble on and on through their microphones, nightly. When DJs and MCs perform interactive elements, they get comfortable with themselves and their microphone use. However, audiences do not care to hear your thoughts on life every five minutes. Based on years of observation, I can say that this behavior will really hurt your relationship with your audience.

In order to make the biggest impact every time you speak, know what you want to say prior to saying it. Then speak with purpose and clear direction. Here is a non-specific example of a simple cake-cutting announcement gone awry:

"Okay, everyone. Hello everyone. Hi Sally. The mother of the bride is out here cutting a rug. Wow! Go Mom! All right, everyone, you look great and I feel the love in the room, but in ten minutes we will be doing something really different. I know you all have a sugar need right now and to satisfy that need we will be cutting the cake and serving it. You heard me right, the cake cutting moment will happen in ten minutes. In a few minutes you can begin to make your way over to the cake and witness the spectacle that is the cake cutting."

I have exaggerated the lengthy speech a little only to prove the point. An effective presenter knows when and how to say a specific announcement so that it is heard and people respond. When I need to tell the audience that the cake will be cut in ten minutes I simply turn on the microphone and say, "We are ten minutes away from the cake cutting, so you have exactly nine minutes and fifty five seconds to make your way to the cake table." This announcement is brief but very specific. Also, the group is not tuning out my announcement because they heard the facts without having to sift through tons of information to find the message. The rule here? Just say it!

Go IMPROVE YOURSELF! You now have five IMMEDIATE tools to change your interactive tendencies from defective to effective! •

To e-mail Todd or to order his new DVD, visit www.mitcheminteractive.com. In future articles, Todd will answer your questions, so e-mail him today—you could see your question published here!

She Supplies the Beat

DJ Sheree Monti brings music—and a lifetime of professionalism—to the people

By Dan Walsh

Music is in Sheree Monti's blood. Maybe it was growing up in West Virginia, where music flows in the streams, down from the mountains. Maybe it came from her musically inclined father, who taught her to play ukelele at the tender age of eight. Or maybe it was that first Joan Baez record her mother gave her. "Both of my parents encouraged me to sing and dance," says the multi-talented performer. "Encourage" is probably not quite strong enough a word: "My father used to book me at various places such as schools, women's club functions, church functions, VA hospitals, etc." This performer learned the meaning of "professional" from day one.

Dancing to Her Own Beat

Singing, dancing and even drumming are all part of Sheree's musical background. "At age 11, I became interested in the drums," she remembers. "How that happened I'm not quite sure. Again, both my parents encouraged me to play and they actually went with me when I played at various clubs and lounges...I have been in and out of bands for over 20 years."

She learned early on how to work toward her goals as an entertainer. "I remember playing gigs for only $50 a night and renting my drums for $25 to do them. Eventually I saved enough money to buy my first and only set of Rogers drums, at the age of 14. At that time, the set cost me $750."

Every aspiring performer has a role model. Sheree's was the world's best-known female percussionist of the day. "Well, of course when I found out that Karen Carpenter played the drums, I was even more determined to play," she reports. "I have to say that she has been a pioneer inspiration for me and I will never forget her!" Sheree even got to meet the artist on a number of occasions.

Sheree went on to enjoy success as a musician, playing all over the South, winning contests, and making TV appearances. She shared the stage with many well-known performers, including Conway Twitty, Frankie Avalon, and Grand Ole Opry stars like Minnie Pearl, just to name a few.

Segue to DJ

Sheree's drumming also led her to her beginnings as a DJ. Like many other musicians during the late 1970s, she saw the potential for better income and less hardship by spinning tunes. "I was still living in West Virginia and a musician friend of mine, who also played drums in a band, starting doing the DJ thing. And

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I thought, hey, if he can, so can I. I had the sound equipment, lighting, record collection... All I needed was two turntables and I was set."

She continued pounding the skins, as well as solo gigging with guitar, after a move to Charlotte, North Carolina in 1981. By 1988, she had settled into DJing exclusively as her primary vocation, spinning in Charlotte clubs and doing mobile events as well.

Musical Mobility

These days, Sheree keeps busy mostly by roving back and forth across the Carolinas from her home base in Charlotte. (She mainly serves Charlotte, Greensboro, and Winston-Salem, North Carolina, along with northern South Carolina, including of course, Myrtle Beach.) She gets the word out through promo materials and a continuously updated Web site (www.shereemonti.com). Her goal is to "Make your event a social highlight—from corporate events to pig pickins—and everything in between." With her extensive music library, she can satisfy musical tastes ranging from the youngest partier to the corporate CEO.

She does, however have a few primary party types: wedding receptions, senior citizen events, school functions, and what she calls "Virtual Reality Parties." Some of her favorite gigs have been for seniors: "My senior citizens were doing the limbo and yes, they got down!" she reports triumphantly. The record for her oldest party guest is 103.

A regular benefit celebration for cancer survivors at the Carolina Medical Center in Charlotte is a meaningful event for Sheree each year. "At this event I sing a few songs, lead some line dancing, and emcee."

Her 39 years in entertainment have taught this DJ how to be flexible in satisfying her audiences. "My service caters to my clients' needs," she affirms. "If I can't provide, I will help them find someone who can. I offer party ideas and themes, party props, giveaways, music suggestions, a line dance instructor, a pianist, a vocalist (myself), games, karaoke, costumes, decorations, event planning, and guest/audience participation, no matter what the form."

Sheree tailors her pricing to the wide variety of functions that she handles. Her charge for an adult event can fall anywhere between $600 and $1000, depending on the type and time of year. She even breaks down the costs right on her Web site, including a direct message to potential clients: "I...invite you to call to allow me the opportunity to discuss how I can service your budget and product needs."

Sticking to a Theme

Special themed events—the Virtual Reality Parties mentioned earlier—are particular favorites for Sheree, giving her a chance to pull out all the dances, games and props necessary to generate excitement. She gives a typical, recent example: "I produced an event for girls 3-13 years of age and their fathers. Our theme was the '60s. I taught them dances from the '60s, such as The Jerk, The Fly, The Mashed Potato, etc., and we participated in games as well...Next year we will be doing karaoke."

Yes, she's already booked for next year. Sheree Monti is a DJ who knows how to satisfy a wide range of clients and have fun doing it. You might expect this life-long professional to be resting on her laurels by now, but she'll have none of that: "I do whatever it takes to make my client happy!" she declares. And the beat goes on. •

Sheree's Instruments of Entertainment

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QSC USA 850 amp
NAD monitor amp
Mackie 600-watt amp
Rane MP 24x mixer
Denon 2000F MK III dual CD player
NAD cassette player
VocoPro DA-809G CDG decoder/digital mixer
JBL MR 925 2-way speakers
Mackie SRS 1500 active subwoofer
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Her goal is to "Make your event a social highlight—from corporate events to pig pickins..."

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Glamour when skill and COLLIDE

DJ Girl 6 uses a full kit of talents to bring her style to the dance floor

By David Kreiner

Alexis (Lex) Mathis, stage name, DJ Girl 6, is a very busy Seattle club DJ. Though, technically speaking, a "newcomer" to DJing, her strong musical and entertainment background helped her make the move into a new realm and immediately set up shop as a pro. She is part of GLOSS (Gorgeous Ladies of the Seattle Scene) and a glance at her schedule on her Web site (www.djgirl6.com) shows just how serious she is about taking over the entire club world. It was a challenge, but we caught up with Lex long enough to throw a few questions her way...

***MOBILE BEAT**: How long have you been in the entertainment business?*

DJ GIRL 6: My father was a singer/guitarist/musician so I've been in the industry my whole life. He'd take me on the road to watch him play, meet famous rock stars and stay up 'til 3 AM. My personal introduction to the entertainment industry was through modeling. I began modeling and dancing when I was about 13 or 14. I still model periodically but not as much as I did when I was younger. I'm only 5'-1", so I'm not exactly runway material. I'd do catalog work, swimsuits, formal wear, boat shows, makeup and lots of print work for artists.

As far as dancing goes, I did the whole cheerleader/dance-team-geek thing in high school. After high school I taught ballroom and hip-hop and go-go'd in nightclubs. I was even fortunate enough to dance with Prince a few times. In 1999 I was in a car accident, severely injuring my left knee. This made dancing for money a little difficult. I can still dance recreationally and never turn down an opportunity to dance on stage with Prince; it's just not as comfortable. Go-go-ing was my first real exposure to the music aspect of the entertainment industry. I'm sure you can imagine how much respect you get dancing in a cage in hot pants. That's OK. I wasn't there to earn their respect—I was there to get some college money! All in all it wasn't such a bad gig.

In 1984 or so, I began drumming, as I was enamored of Sheila E. I played in the school band and even in the orchestra at the University of Washington. After college, I played with the Marching Corp. It was funky for a while but didn't fulfill my need for a more contemporary groove. All the while, I

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played in bands here and there. After a few years of gigging with bands, I grew weary of people not showing up, and not taking the music as seriously as I did. I had a strong academic background and drive to excel quickly, so I stopped drumming and took to the turntables where I was the only one in control.

I dabbled in DJing in the '80s, while I was learning to drum, but equipment was economically beyond my means. I'd been flirting with it behind doors for about 1-2 years but didn't take to my first battle until May 2003. Because I'd been in the industry so long (as had my family), opportunities came from all directions. I've been very fortunate. Also, being a drummer and dancer gives you an exceptional springboard to become a DJ. As such, I say I've been spinnin' about a year but you'd never know by my work.

***MB**: Do you do mostly club dates? Any mobile work as well?*
G6: I generally spin under four circumstances: clubs, fashion shows, resorts and sponsored events. By sponsored events I mean events held for venue staff and owners by beverage companies, etc. Those are really a challenge because you get all types of consumers who all like different types of music. I coordinated one gig with LA Kendall of Hitgirl where we had Princess Superstar spinnin', and THAT is where I learned the magic of mash-ups. She had the hip-hop crowd, the rock crowd and the Top 40 crowd going insane when she spun a Missy Elliott/AC-DC mash-up—they even tore down the ceiling tiles they were so worked up! Most of the time I spin for clubs. I've never done a mobile gig—never been asked either.

***MB**: What type of equipment do you use?*
G6: I'm livin' up to the legendary Q-Bert Octagon! At home I have four Technics Mk3s, two Pioneer CDJ-1000s, a Pioneer DJM-600, a Pioneer DJM-500, a sub mixer (for 2x4s), about four older Gemini mixers, a little Boss sampler, an Akai 2000 sampler, a laptop, stacks and four powered JBL EON 15s, and a MIDI controller (keyboard)—I think that's it. I'm one of those girls who REALLY LIKES HER TOYS!

***MB**: Do you use any computers or software at gigs, such as PCDJ or Final Scratch?*
G6: I've used PCDJ and played a few of my re-mixes so I'd have time to run to the restroom. Outside of that I'm pretty attached to my vinyl. I will use my PC to create beats in Reason or to remix in Acid and play live loops and samples, but not to mix songs. It just doesn't feel the same. It feels too artificial to me. I know others swear by it but I reserve most of my PC work for the studio, loops, samples or other laptop battle style techniques—just not for general mixing.

***MB**: Do you book your own dates, or do you have an agent?*
G6: I have an agent—LA Kendall. I am very lucky because she is also a DJ and she does not require me to be exclusive. I did book myself once at Medusa in Seattle because I absolutely loved the polished feel of their club night...

I had a...drive to excel quickly, so I stopped drumming and took to the turntables where I was the only one in control.

I take DJing and producing very seriously. Booking would take away from the time I need to constantly keep making that next step to become a better and better DJ. New technology is coming out everyday—I'm just trying to keep up!

***MB**: What type of music do you see as most influential for your audience?*
G6: I spin mostly hip-hop, with some mash-ups, some breaks, very few house tracks, and some Top 40...my audience is allowing me to dabble in some hard core and rock mash-ups/samples (like "American Woman," "My Love Is Alive," AC-DC, Nine Inch Nails, etc.). As long as I use some of my hip-hop beats under them or mash them up completely with lyrics from someone contemporary like 50 Cent, they're all good. Another way I do it is just keep my favorite rock riffs in the sampler. Lil Jon's voice is also having a strong influence on the voice of hip-hop—very "uncompromising," "rough/raspy," "thick bandwidth,"—just straight-up demanding your attention!

***MB**: Where do you see music going this year?*
G6: If I knew the answer to that I'd be on top of the charts! It's a real eclectic time for music right now. I am seeing more hip-hop beats (as opposed to disco, "four-on-the-floor"-style beats) making their way into house. I'm seeing producers taking a more affirmative role in the final product and making bigger names for themselves. The Phil Spector "wall of sound" is returning with people like Timberland and P. Diddy. Ultimately, I think this means a more complex sound, more sophisticated music and an overall improvement in the quality of what we hear on the radio. Electro-clash may be a part of this but it seems too fragmented for me to really pin it down to a "sound."

I am a little troubled by the increase in the monopolizing of radio by larger companies. I feel this is partially causing frustration in the music industry. This makes it more difficult to find its new voice. The factions are being silenced by radio but circulated through the Internet. That becomes a socio-economic issue, because not everyone can afford a computer...There seems to be a shift in who's being heard.•

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SONG STORY

The Hot, Hot, Hot Soul of CALYPSO

By Dan Walsh

Soca gets people moving in the islands—and at American wedding receptions, too

The party is in full swing. The crowd has been ebbing and flowing on the dance floor ever since dinner, and now it's time to rev up the excitement. What will you play? Why not transform the banquet hall into a tropical club? You cue up "Hot Hot Hot" and sure enough, like Pavlov's dogs, everyone except Aunt Betsy (who has a bad hip) jumps up or is pulled by their partners into an immediate conga line. Chalk up another one for Buster Poindexter.

Buster Move, Arrow Hits the Target

But wait. There's more behind this phenomenon than a onetime punk rocker's alternate lounge lizard persona. Yes, the version of this party classic that we play most often comes from the eponymous 1987 debut record by Buster Poindexter, a.k.a. David Johansen, previously the singer for the cross-dressing, "proto punk" band The New York Dolls. But, like many a great hit, Poindexter's version is a cover of an original by an artist that many have never heard.

The original artist and writer of "Hot Hot Hot" is one Alphonsus Cassell, a.k.a. Arrow, of the Caribbean island of Montserrat. Arrow is a purveyor of one of the most energetic dance music styles on the planet: soca.

Originally a straightforward calypso artist, Arrow scored his first major success with "Hot Hot Hot," from his 1983 album of the same title. It was an immediate hit in the Caribbean and then exploded internationally when the song got picked up as the theme for the 1986 World Cup soccer tournament in Mexico. Arrow went on to add hip-hop and world music elements to his music, enjoying continued success through the '80s and '90s, though not on the scale of his initial smash.

Soca Misconception

So what is soca? According to the generally accepted recipe, take calypso, add some up-tempo soul and a little salsa to taste, then heat the BPM up to sizzling. *Soul* + *calypso* = *soca* is the popular explanation of the name. However, more astute observers of Caribbean music, like the folks at the Web music portal Carib-Planet, see Indian influences playing the major role: "Soca music originated as a fusion of calypso with Indian rhythms, thus combining the musical traditions to the two major ethnic groups of Trinidad and Tobago" (http://caribplanet.homestead.com—check out "Caribbean Music 101").

Responding to reggae's challenge to calypso's supremacy in the 1960s, a 6'-4" Trinidadian known as Lord Shorty (a.k.a. Garfield Blackman) is credited with the creation of the new, upbeat version of calypso, based on his experimentation with Indian percussion. By the mid seventies, the style had gained acceptance throughout the Caribbean, and, in due time, was misnamed by music journalists.

Modern soca tracks are usually a bit more racy than Arrow's big hit, which informs us simply: "Me mind on fire, me soul on fire / Feelin' hot, hot, hot." Soca has become a staple of Caribbean party culture but has not had much influence on American music beyond the parties where Mobile DJs play. We have Buster Poindexter to thank for translating Arrow's creation into a perennial entry in *Mobile Beat's* Top 200 and reception play lists everywhere. •

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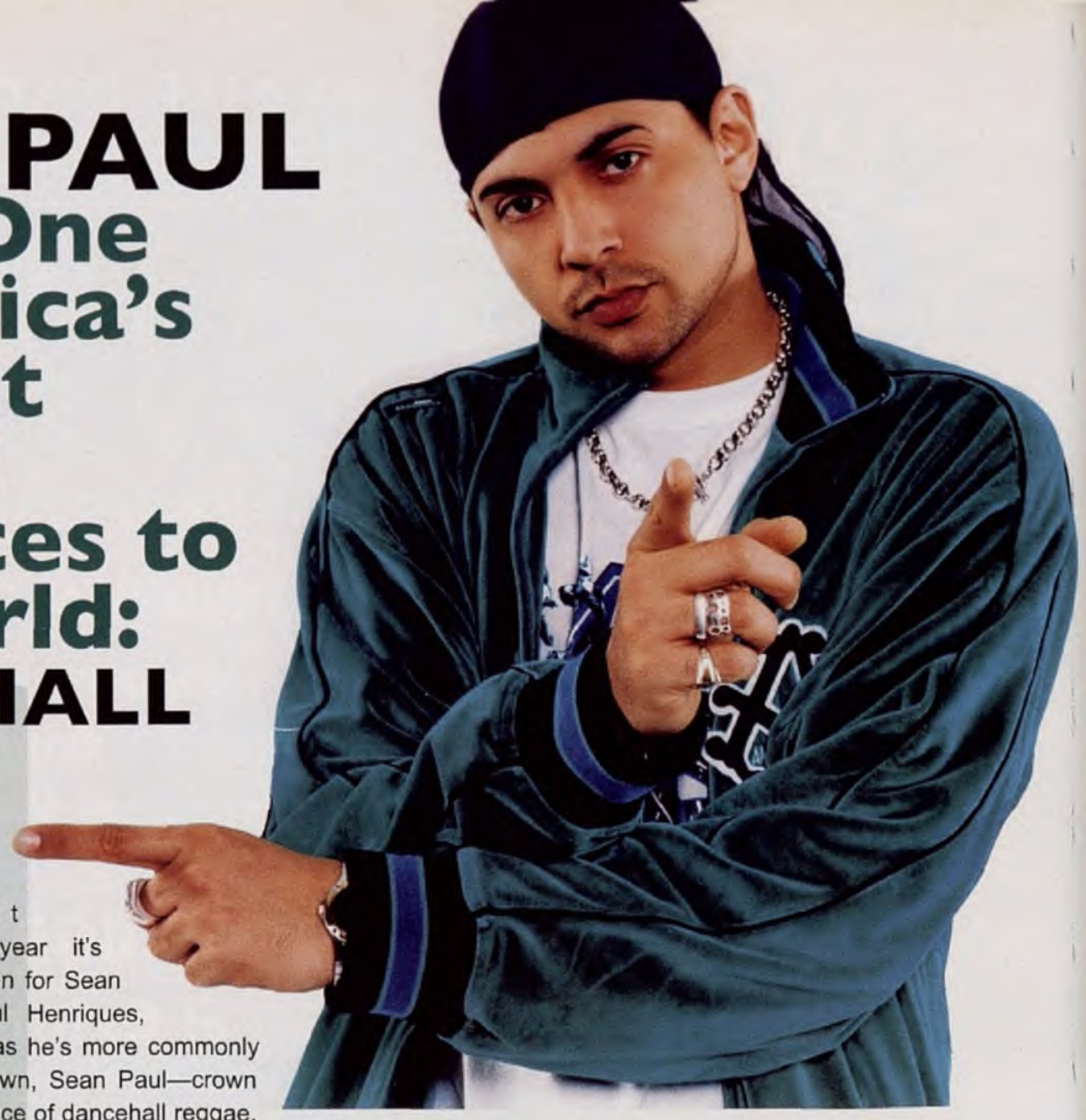
SEAN PAUL Brings One of Jamaica's Greatest Natural Resources to the World: DANCEHALL

By Andy Schmitz



What a year it's been for Sean Paul Henriques, or as he's more commonly known, Sean Paul—crown prince of dancehall reggae. He has topped charts all around the world with his infectious dancehall music and collaborated with some of the world's most popular hip-hop and R&B artists. With mega-hits of his own like "Gimme the Light," off his multi-platinum album, *Dutty Rock*, and collaborations like "Baby Boy" with Beyonce, he has become a superstar.

Sean Paul was born in Jamaica, to a Portuguese father and a Jamaican mother, in 1973. His influences included everything from dancehall artists like Super Cat to the legendary Bob Marley to ska-pop-punkers No Doubt. He began his career in the music business unsure if dancehall was the right style of music for him. He started out by doing what is called "sing-jaying"—that is, emceeing during the verse and then singing over the chorus of a track. At the time, it wasn't that popular of a thing to do, but Sean's style of sing-jaying began catching fire in clubs with songs like "Infiltrate" and "Deport Them." As his name was becoming known in Jamaica, he was also getting played in clubs in Belize, Trinidad and the rest of the Caribbean, as well as Miami. He then hooked up with another emerging sing-jay, Mr. Vegas, to release a collaboration called *Hot Gal Today*. It helped them gain access to the mainstream and worldwide success was soon to follow. With two songs burning up the American charts, Sean Paul's career in the states was sent into the stratosphere. The success of "Hot Gal Today" and "Deport Them" marked the first time one artist had two songs at once on the *Billboard* R&B Singles Chart.

Dancehall Background

Dancehall is another variation of Jamaica's unique dance music, related to reggae, ska, rock steady and others. The deejay or MC that we know today also came from Jamaica. In the early 1950s, Jamaicans had little money to spend on records. The alternative to buying records was listening and dancing to neighborhood sound systems or "sounds." Flamboyant operators usually maintained the sounds. They would hold weekly concerts to showcase their records; these were called "dancehalls" but were rarely indoors. This type of performance gave an opportunity for personalities to shine, so the first MCs and deejays began rhyming over records with the vocals removed, called "dub plates." Sean Paul got his start with dub plates and enjoyed local success with clubs spinning his rhymes over the funkiest "riddims."

The staggering recent success of Sean Paul has put many fans of dance music on the hunt for more dancehall music and has re-ignited the reggae music market. Following the crossover success of his second album, *Dutty Rock*, (Sean Paul's first recording with Atlantic records) it seems everybody wants a piece of the action.

"I see dancehall reggae and hip-hop as fused together," Sean Paul explains. "When I was a kid, they were the two kinds of music that spoke to me and said 'MOVE!'" With this one statement Sean Paul hammers his existence as an artist home…his songs will make you MOVE! •

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SET LIST

Making Oldies Golden

With your host, Ron Carpenito

We're back! This is the section of *Mobile Beat* where we not only give you specific songs to play, but we suggest how you might put them together to guarantee a groovin' dance floor. Anyone can play music but it's a true DJ who can mix it well and keep the crowd's excitement going. As we said last time, especially for mobiles, over time, experimentation and creativity can end up by the wayside, replaced with repetition and a fear of trying new things. One remedy: sharing song sets...What is old to you becomes new to me!

This time, we've gone through all the responses and emails and have come up with a great set of '50s and '60s rock provided by Scott J. Goldoor, president of Signature DJs in Pennsylvania (www.signaturedjs.com). Scott has been serving the Delaware County and Tri-State area for over 20 years. He runs a full time operation employing 12 DJ associates.

Scott says, "Usually I start with two strong slow ballads, 'Can't Help Falling In Love' by Elvis Presley and 'Unforgettable' by Natalie and Nat King Cole." He then follows up with this great opening set:

LET'S TWIST AGAIN (Chubby Checker) into I SAW HER STANDING THERE (Beatles), beat mixed or slammed in on the correct beat. Follow with RUNAROUND SUE (Dion) into ROCKIN' ROBIN (Bobby Day)—beat mix by speeding up the former and slowing down the latter. Next comes MORSE CODE OF LOVE (Capris) into BARBARA ANN (Beach Boys).

Scott also points out that near the end of dinner, before the major dancing portion begins, he likes to "pick up the tempo from the traditional Sinatra-type jazz and easy listening." He does this by announcing, "As you finish up your meals our dance floor is once again open. Please feel free to get up and stretch your legs as we start to pick things up tonight." He then goes into this set:

BUILD ME UP BUTTERCUP (Foundations) into UNDER THE BOARDWALK (Drifters) into MY GIRL (Temptations).

Thanks for the input Scott! In an upcoming installment of "Set List" I want to showcase some great disco dance sets, so please send your favorite surefire floor-fillers to me at ron@djroncarpenito.com or to the editor at dwalsh@mobilebeat.com. Remember...play the best music, mix it well, and they WILL dance!

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GROOVY SCIENCE PROJECT

Fat Face Records has released the first dance track ever calibrated with Polyphonic HMI's Hit Song Science (HSS) application, using artificial intelligence to predict hit potential. The track, entitled "Big Bertha Butt," is performed by Huggy Bear (a.k.a. Antonio Fargas—the original "Huggy Bear" from the '70s TV series, *Starsky & Hutch*). Making worldwide news at its unveiling early last year, HSS was named by *The New York Times* as one of the 67 biggest ideas that made a difference in 2003.

"Early response to the song has been great," says Huggy. "It is great to be in on the ground level with HSS—it is a super new tool for artists. I am looking forward to the release of the song and the response from a wider audience."

HSS uses artificial intelligence applications to analyze the underlying mathematical patterns in music. By comparing the patterns in new, yet-to-be-released music to the patterns in many past hits, the software is able to gauge the hit potential of new music on a given chart (Dance, Rock, Top 40, etc.).

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3 from Promo Only Honored

So far this year, three of Promo Only's (www.promoonly.com) top talents have been honored by the dance music community. At the 2004 Winter Music Conference (www.wmcon.com), promotions director Cary Vance was voted best record promoter. A key player in breaking such dance classics as "Buffalo Stance," by Neneh Cherry, "Keep On Movin'," by Soul II Soul, and many more, Vance has recently distinguished himself with his skillful promotion of the new Janet Jackson and Fatboy Slim releases.

Along with overseeing Promo Only's Latin and Rhythm Club series, Leony Vega tops the list of Latin's most in-demand DJ/producers. He keeps busy with his radio mix show, *La Mezcla Del Medio Dia*, a residency at Universal Orlando's Latin Quarter, and by remixing top Latin artists like Elvis Crespo. His version of "Rie y Llora," by the late Celia Cruz, was voted Best Latin Remix at WMC 2004.

At the 2004 DanceStar USA show (www.dancestar.com), programmer Dave Dresden picked up the No-Cover Award for Best Breakthrough DJ. With partner Josh Gabriel, he scored his seventh #1 Billboard Dance Chart hit with the Madonna–Britney Spears collaboration, "Me Against the Music," and has remixed artists like Jewel, Sarah McLachlan, Annie Lennox and Deborah Cox.

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The DVDs are produced by ScreenPlay VJ, the newest division of ScreenPlay Inc. (www.screenplayinc.com). "It's a pleasure to make video even more accessible to DJ/VJ professionals," said Doug Howard, division director.

David Graupner, CEO of TM Century, is very excited about the affiliation with ScreenPlay: "We've been looking for the opportunity to provide our customers with a great source for music videos on DVD. ScreenPlay's reputation within the industry coupled with the experience of Doug Howard makes this a powerful combination."

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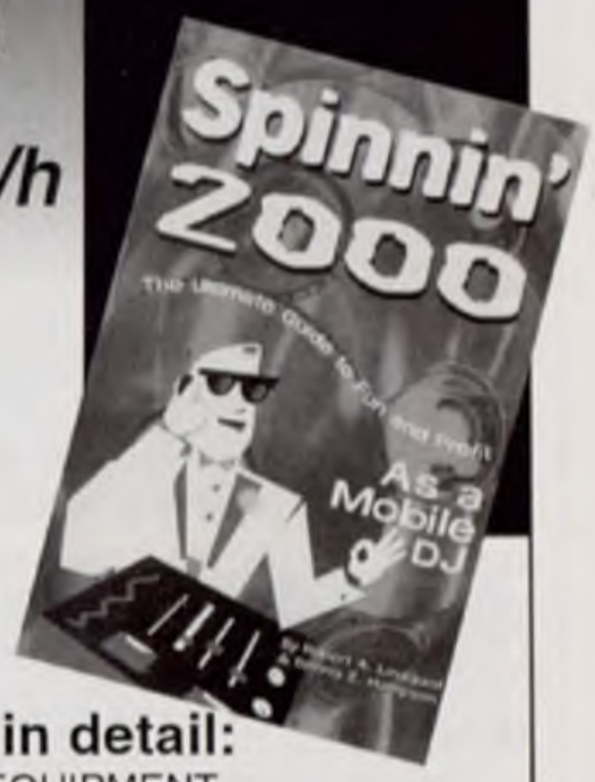

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dance Music IN FULL BLOOM

By David Kreiner

Classic tracks are reborn, pop stars find extra success on the dance floor, and hip-hop grooves keep going strong on the latest crop of remix compilations...

We start off with ***ULTIMIX 103***. This series features extended remixes of today's hottest club and radio hits. Getting things rolling, from her latest CD, *In the Zone*, is Britney Spears (featuring Madonna) with "Me Against the Music." Part 1 uses Rishi Rich's "Desi Kulcha Remix" with its pounding, tribal drum sound (120 BPM), while Part 2 features Peter's electro-flavored mix with a hard, 4x4 drum beat and a heavy synth bass line (130 BPM). Oba Frank Lord follows with a sweet remix of Depeche Mode's "Personal Jesus" at 130 BPM. Using the Giuseppe D. production as a basis, remixer Stacy Mier does a nice job on this classic club hit, using strong beats and dark vocals. Next up is the theme from *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, "All Things (Just Keep Getting Better)" by Widelife (featuring Simone Denny). This retro disco song (at a peppy 129 BPM) will work well in late night sets.

Nelly Furtado is back with a very clubby "Powerless (Say What You Want)" at 124 BPM. This is a great late-night mix and is a welcome return for this pop singer. Beyonce is up next with two flavors of "Me, Myself and I." Part 1 is a sultry, down-tempo 93-BPM mix with weighty synth bass. Part 2 is a smoking, 132-BPM house remix. The second mix really works at the high tempo, and has a Donna Summer-like vocal sound throughout. Missy Elliot kicks butt with "Pass That Dutch Remix" at a blazing 130 BPM. It benefits from an unreleased Scumfrog remix, which makes it a very trancey house track. Badboy Joe (featuring Aubrey) keeps the party going with a remix of the Supremes' classic "You Keep Me Hangin' On." Clocking in at a fiery 136 BPM, it features a filtered girly vocal over a slamming house track. Alicia Keys is back on the charts with the very danceable "You Don't Know My Name" (90 BPM). The rap is moved till after the break for easier programming. Closing out this set is Maroon 5 with "Harder to Breathe." This down-tempo (75 BPM) pop rocker is a cool, non-radio remix.

FUNKYMIX 74 features extended remixes of today's hottest urban hits. "Stunt 101" by G Unit starts it off (96 BPM). This latest hit from the Shady/Aftermath camp might as well be a 50 Cent joint. It's a clean, usable remix from Stacy Mier. Recent scandal hasn't slowed down R. Kelly's flow of hits from his *Chocolate Factory* set. His latest, "Step in the Name of Love" is a slow, sexy R&B smash (95 BPM) with an old school flavor.

It's amazing how two dead people can have more hit-making power than the living. Tupac and Notorious B.I.G. have a "ghost" hit with "Runnin' (Dying to Live)" at 83 BPM. This track is from the upcoming *Tupac Resurrection* film. Mya (featuring Fat Lip and Tre) has a sweet R&B hit with "Fallin'" at 95 BPM. Some Pharcyde samples and well-placed raps set off the mix perfectly. Hot on the heels of his collaboration with Nelly, Murphy Lee comes back with "Wat Da Hook Gon Be?" at 96 BPM. There are lots of holes in this one to have tons of fun with. TLC and supporting artist Lil Jon and the Youngbloodz get it goin' Dirty South style with "Come Get Some" (102 BPM). This crunk anthem features well-placed scratching alongside sweet TLC vocals. Another Dirty South rapper, Cee-Lo, has been having a lot of success lately and "I'll Be Around" (93

BPM) is another great addition. More crunk seems to be the order of the day as Bravehearts (featuring Nas and Lil Jon) get it on with "Quick to Back Down" at a down-tempo 80 BPM. Big Tymers' "This Is How We Do" (101 BPM) gets a cool treatment from Dave Jackson, with some Montell Jordan samples thrown into the mix and super clean production values. Closing out the set is Nelly with "Iz U" at a blazing 143 BPM. It also has a nice 72-BPM breakdown in the middle that can transition you back to slower tracks. This is a must-have remix.

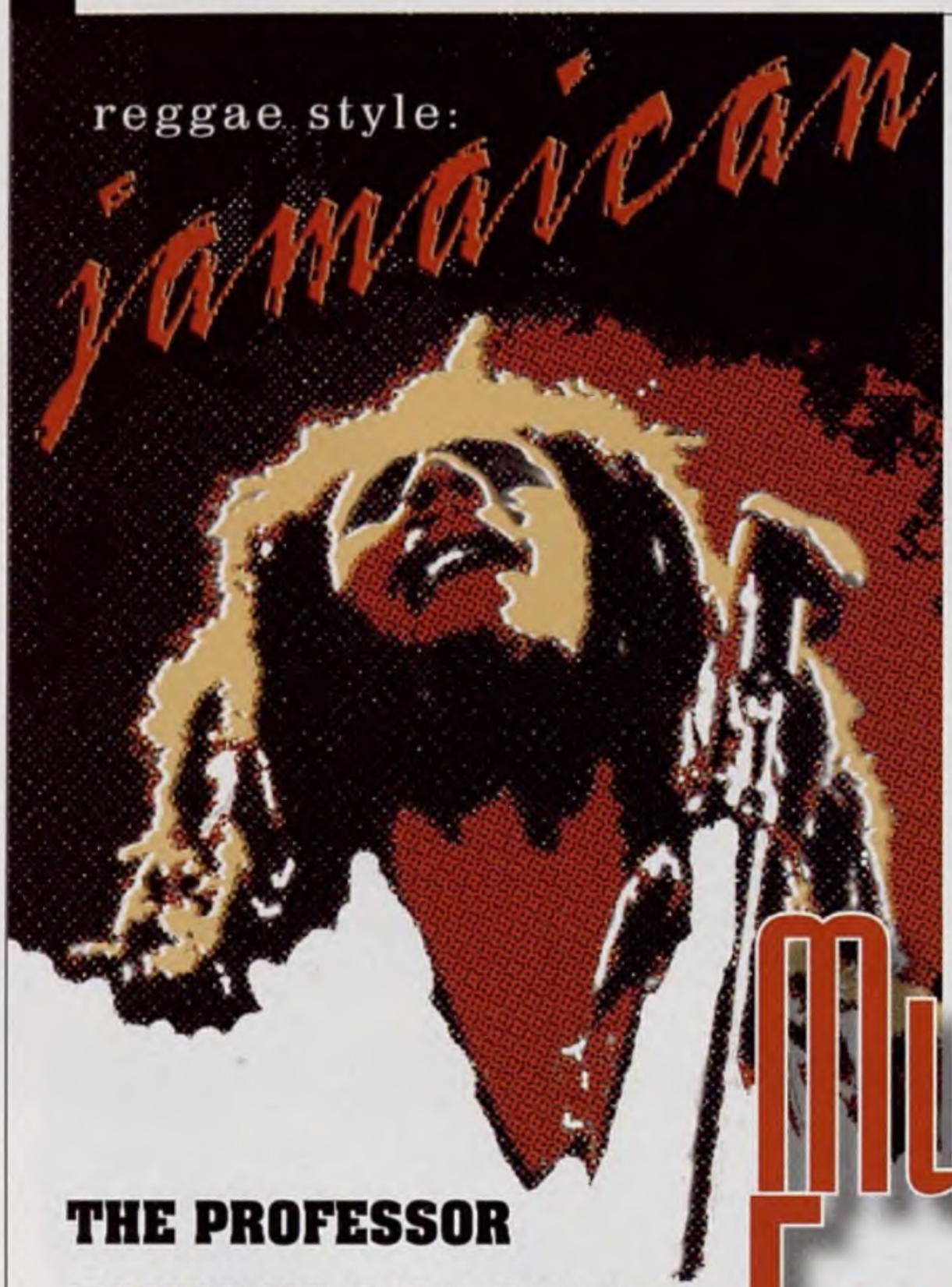
Keeping with that R&B/hip-hop vibe is ***STREET TRACKS 73***. Starting things off is the gigantic radio smash, "Change Clothes," from Jay-Z at a fun 104 BPM. This is a great set-starter that will get the crowd on the floor. The girls got it goin' on with "Not Today" from Mary J. Blige and Eve (94 BPM). This is the essential remix of this song to have. Another fun-sounding radio hit is the latest from Loon, "Down for Me" (featuring Mario Winans). This easygoing, 98-BPM remix has a very usable R&B feel. Ludacris (featuring Shawna) has that nasty sound with "Stand Up" at 99 BPM. Luda's rhymes are in full effect here. Keeping with that wicked vibe, 112 (featuring Ludacris) follows with the massive R&B radio hit, "Hot & Wet." It's a very usable remix and another great set-starter at 104 BPM. The last full track on the set is "Gangsta Girl" by Big Tymers (featuring R. Kelly) at 76 BPM. This straightforward mix will work well with all of your nightly programming. Closing out this fine disc is a set of four very useful loops and drum beats (see listing for details). •

All the remixes reviewed here are available from The Source DJ Music Supply. For a free catalog, call 800-775-3472. Surf/shop at www.thesourceformusic.com.

ULTIMIX 103		
Me Against the Music, Part 1	BRITNEY SPEARS feat. MADONNA	120
Me Against the Music, Part 2	BRITNEY SPEARS feat. MADONNA	130
Personal Jesus	OBA FRANK LORD	130
All Things (Just Keep Getting Better)	WIDELIFE feat. SIMONE DENNY	129
Powerless (Say What You Want)	NELLY FURTADO	124
Me, Myself and I, Part 1	BEYONCE	93
Me, Myself and I, Part 2	BEYONCE	132
Pass That Dutch Remix	MISSY ELLIOT	130
You Keep Me Hangin' On	BADBOY JOE feat. AUBREY	136
You Don't Know My Name	ALICIA KEYS	90
Harder To Breathe (CD-Only)	MAROON 5	75

FUNKYMIX 74		
Stunt 101	G UNIT	96
Step In The Name Of Love	R. KELLY	95
Runnin' (Dying to Live)	TUPAC feat. NOTORIOUS B.I.G.	83
Fallin'	MYA feat. FAT LIP AND TRE	95
Wat Da Hook Gon Be?	MURPHY LEE	96
Come Get Some	TLC feat. LIL JON AND THE YOUNGBLOODZ	102
I'll Be Around	CEE-LO	93
Quick To Back Down	BRAVEHEARTS feat. NAS AND LIL JON	80
This Is How We Do (CD Bonus)	BIG TYMERS	101
Iz U (CD Bonus)	NELLY	143

STREET TRACKS 73		
Change Clothes	JAY-Z	104
Not Today	MARY J. BLIGE feat. EVE	94
Down for Me	LOON feat. MARIO WINANS	98
Stand Up	LUDACRIS feat. SHAWNA	99.2
Hot & Wet	112 feat. LUDACRIS	104
Gangsta Girl (CD Bonus)	BIG TYMERS feat. R. KELLY	76
Stop Loop	VARIOUS	100
Simple Loop	VARIOUS	100.3
Soul Loop (CD Bonus)	VARIOUS	103.9
Movin' Loop (CD Bonus)	VARIOUS	104



Music's Exodus

THE PROFESSOR TAKES US ON A GUIDED TOUR OF MUSIC FROM THE JAMMIN' ISLAND

By Jay Maxwell

Most people's knowledge of reggae music is limited to two ideas: Bob Marley and Jamaica. I would venture to guess that every mobile disc jockey's library contains Bob Marley and the Wailers' best selling CD, *Legend*. Armed only with this one reggae CD, if someone requested some reggae music at an event, it's a good bet that even when you thought you didn't have much to offer, you replied, "How about a cut from Bob Marley?" and the guest was at least partially satisfied. Even the most inexperienced DJ should know that if a request comes in to play something from Jamaica, that it should be interpreted as "Play some reggae we can dance to." But, since most Mobile DJs know little about reggae music, get ready to enroll in a short course, Reggae 101...

Jamaican Infiltration

One glance at this issue's top 50 list and you will see more tunes by Bob Marley than any other artist. He rates an impressive four of the top ten hits and seven of the top 50 on the list. As you look closer at the list, you might begin to realize that even if you didn't have any CD in your collection labeled as "reggae," you actually have many (perhaps most) of the top 50 songs. It may surprise you to see songs by mainstream pop artists like Billy Ocean, Eric Clapton and Culture Club mixed with traditional reggae artists like Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, The Melodians, and Third World. These mainstream pop artists should be given credit for exposing the masses to the sounds of reggae. With their captive audience, they took the opportunity and chance to introduce something different, a sound that had been limited to a minority of listeners.

Until recently, most music stores didn't even have a separate section for reggae. It was either mixed in with rock or R&B or perhaps filed with International Music. Today, most major music stores have a section dedicated strictly to reggae music. The space allotted usually isn't very expansive, but at least this island-influenced music has obtained its own section. Bob Marley, Jimmy Cliff, and Peter Tosh paved the way for today's commercially successful artists like UB40, Shaggy, Inner Circle, Maxi Priest and Sean Paul. Take note that Top 40 and R&B/hip-hop radio stations are, at the moment, pumping out the sounds of Shaggy and Sean Paul (see "Music in Motion," p. 68), representing reggae's latest generation.

Simmering Flavors

What is reggae anyway? Whether or not you sport dreadlocks, reggae music has a groove that is designed to keep you moving. Its slowed-down tempo is for crowds who just want to dance. It is influenced by African, Caribbean and American R&B music, but reggae is uniquely Jamaican. In the early 1960s, it gave the poor people a voice to help celebrate their newfound independence from England. It gave them a way to express their joy, their heritage, and their life. It is a genuine folk music art form from an island whose entire population adds up to only half of London's.

In the 1950s, the most popular style of music in Jamaica was American R&B. The working class couldn't get enough of it. Many people were too poor to buy radios, so both the young and the old would go to open space dances where

But, when the trend in the U.S. shifted from R&B to rock and roll, Jamaicans had little appetite for this trend. Rather quickly, Jamaicans found their own identity in a sound they created called "ska."

Ska had an irresistible beat, but demanded a ton of energy from its dancers. England embraced ska music in the mid-1960s and Jamaica tried to export the style to our homeland. They gave it their best shot by sending Jimmy Cliff to the World's Fair in New York in 1964, but the attempt to start a "Jamaican invasion" of the United States failed. Ska music then progressed to a slower style called rock-steady. The heyday of this style was very short, but it paved the way for an even slower style: reggae, also known as "roots." With reggae, people could stay on the dance floor a lot longer than with ska (every disc jockey's dream).

Lasting Impact

While reggae music, in and of itself, has never been a dominant force in the United States, it is the ancestor of two of the most popular music forms of the last two decades: rap and hip-hop. In Jamaica, the flip side of a hit single usually had the "dub" or instrumental version. The MCs would often play this "dub" side and chant, sing or rap over it. This style of reggae is known as dancehall and is the sister of rap music. This style was quickly imported to the Jamaican communities in New York City and immediately caught on. It spread like wildfire, propelling the rapid development of rap and hip-hop music.

Bob Marley never had a hit single listed in *Billboard's* Top 40 (he only had one U.S. single listed, "Roots, Rock, Reggae" at #51), yet in his short life of only 36 years he was able to lay the groundwork for everything that followed called reggae. When Eric Clapton covered Marley's, "I Shot the Sheriff" in 1974, and took it to the top spot on the airwaves, it was the first time that many people had heard this unique beat. Thirty years later, reggae continues to influence the most popular music, especially hip-hop and rap. Reggae is great dance music, and often the music of choice when someone yells, "Play something we can dance to!" •

Easy Skanking Tunes:
Reggae's Top 50

1	Red Red Wine	UB40
2	No Woman No Cry	BOB MARLEY
3	Bad Boys (*Cops* Theme)	INNER CIRCLE
4	Is This Love	BOB MARLEY
5	Boombastic	SHAGGY
6	Stir It Up	JOHNNY NASH
7	Jamming	BOB MARLEY
8	I Can See Clearly Now	JIMMY CLIFF
9	Baby I Love Your Way	BIG MOUNTAIN
10	Buffalo Soldier	BOB MARLEY
11	Three Little Birds	BOB MARLEY
12	Here Comes the Hotstepper	INI KAMOZE
13	Sexual Healing	MAX-A-MILLION
14	Tomorrow People	ZIGGY MARLEY
15	Mr. Loverman	SHABBA RANKS
16	Like Glue	SEAN PAUL
17	Here I Am	UB40
18	Get Up Stand Up	PETER TOSH
19	Israelites	DESMOND DEKKER
20	Get Busy	SEAN PAUL
21	Close to You	MAXI PRIEST
22	It Wasn't Me	SHAGGY
23	Informer	SNOW
24	Pass the Dutchie	MUSICAL YOUTH
25	Gimme the Light	SEAN PAUL
26	Angel	SHAGGY
27	Sweat (A La La La La Song)	INNER CIRCLE
28	One Love	BOB MARLEY
29	Electric Avenue	EDDY GRANT
30	Wonderful World, Beautiful People	JIMMY CLIFF
31	Shy Guy	DIANA KING
32	Rivers of Babylon	MELODIANS
33	Way You Do the Things You Do	UB40
34	Dance and Shout	SHAGGY
35	Oh Carolina	SHAGGY
36	Now That We Found Love	THIRD WORLD
37	Montego Bay	BOBBY BLOOM
38	That Girl	MAXI PRIEST & SHAGGY
39	Boom Shakalak	APACHE INDIAN
40	I'll Take You There	GENERAL PUBLIC
41	Wild World	MAXI PRIEST
42	Many Rivers to Cross	JIMMY CLIFF
43	All That She Wants	ACE OF BASE
44	Can't Help Falling in Love	UB40
45	Knockin' On Heaven's Door	ERIC CLAPTON
46	Exodus	BOB MARLEY
47	Do You Really Want to Hurt Me	CULTURE CLUB
48	Caribbean Queen	BILLY OCEAN
49	I Shot the Sheriff	ERIC CLAPTON
50	Pressure Drop	ROBERT PALMER

MUSIC NEWS

Party Management Tools

By Fred Sebastian

For full track listings or availability on any of the CDs in Music News, visit www.HitMusicb2b.com or call A.V.C. Sebastian at (973)731-5290

As a professional DJ, you need to keep the right tools in your musical toolbox, in order to be ready for any type of event and any part of the party. Luckily, themed compilations still provide what you need to guide most parties properly. Check out the following selections, which are guaranteed to give you what you need to cool down the event, heat up the dance floor or get the line dancing into high gear.

At most formal Mobile DJ events, there are times when you have to slow the pace: before the dance party starts, when it's time to eat, and sometimes when you say goodnight. For those times, the right jazz music is often just the thing to play. The compilation ***JAZZIN 1-2*** is a terrific double-CD collection of hits from modern smooth jazz superstars that's ideal for the time when great music of a mellower sort is called for.

Tutu	MILES DAVIS
Rio De Janeiro Blue	RANDY CRAWFORD
Sweet Love	NAJEE
Eggplant	MICHAEL FRANKS
Don't Make Me Wait for Love	KENNY G
Eleanor Rigby	STANLEY JORDAN
Blackbird	BOBBY McFERRIN
Man in the Moon	YELLOWJACKETS
What Love Can Do	EARL KLUGH
Makin' Whoopee!	DR. JOHN w/ RICKIE LEE JONES
Any Other Fool	SADAO WANTANABE
Friends	LARRY CARLTON
Tropical	BOBBY LYLE
Feeling Inside	GERALD ALBRIGHT
The Camera Never Lies	MICHAEL FRANKS

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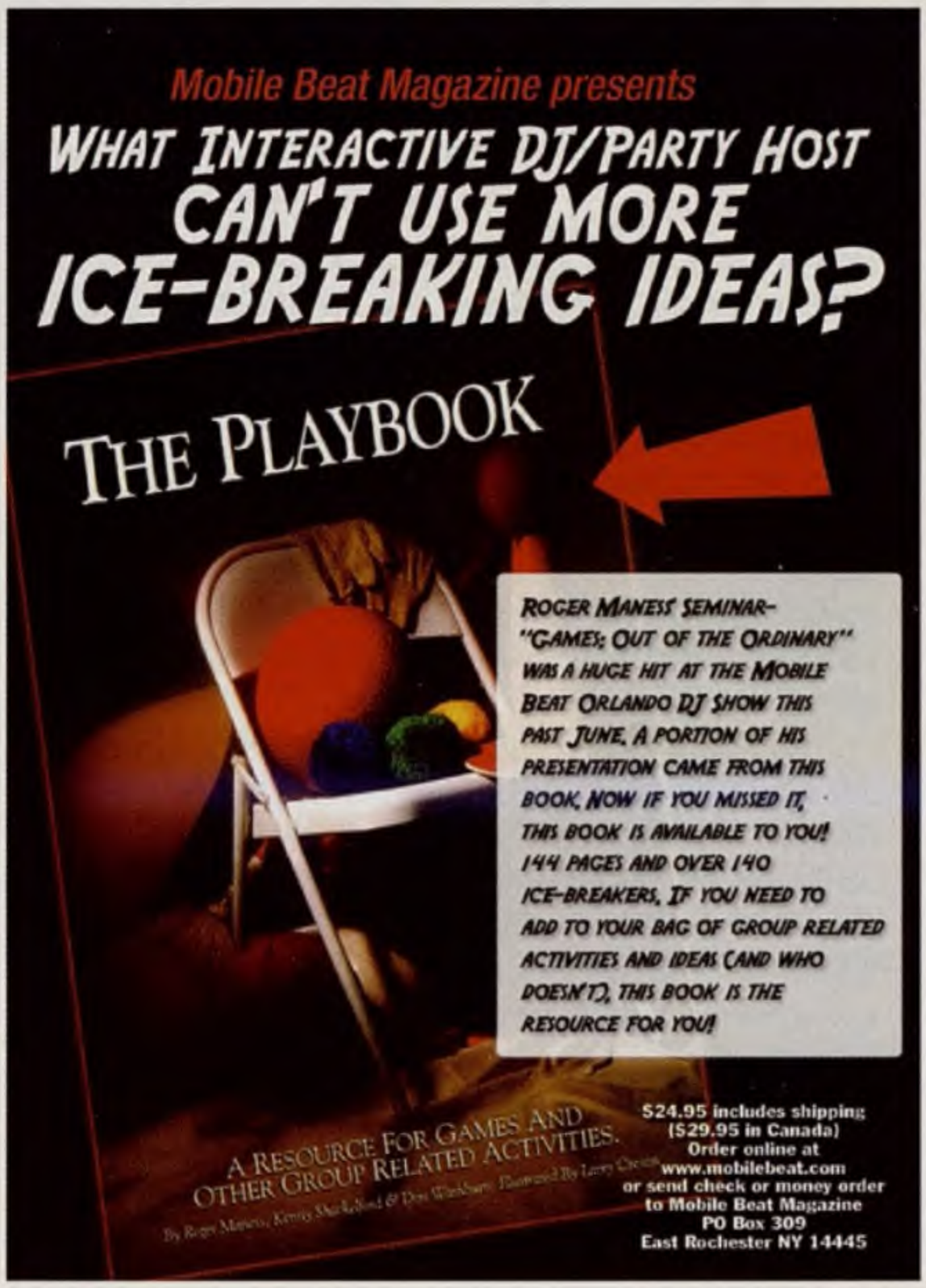

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Generally speaking, a party is not a party without at least a bit of disco music. And with the 43 killer tracks on ***ULTIMATE DISCO MIX***, you may just want to let this non-stop disco party play on. Despite the continuous mix, you can track to your favorites anywhere on either of the two CDs. This excellent compilation also features hard-to-find disco gems.

He's the Greatest Dancer	SISTER SLEDGE
I'm Coming Out	DIANA ROSS
Play That Funky Music	WILD CHERRY
And the Beat Goes On	WHISPERS
Turn the Music Up	PLAYERS ASSOCIATION
I Thought It Was You	HERBIE HANCOCK
Get Down	GENE CHANDLER
Lady Marmalade	LABELLE
Boogie Nights	HEATWAVE
Hot Stuff	DONNA SUMMER
Cuba	GIBSON BROS
Let's All Chant	MICHAEL ZAGER BAND
Use It Up & Wear It Out	ODYSSEY
Instant Replay	DAN HARTMAN
Boogie Wonderland	EARTH WIND & FIRE
Can You Feel the Force	REAL THING
Contact	EDWIN STARR
You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real)	SYLVESTER
Can You Feel It	JACKSONS
Shame	EVELYN KING
Knock On Wood	AMII STEWART
Move On Up	CURTIS MAYFIELD
Don't Stop The Music	YARBROUGH & PEOPLES
Do the Bus Stop (Are You Ready)	FATBACK BAND
Brick House	COMMODORES
Funkin' for Jamaica	TOM BROWNE
Ladies Night	KOOL & THE GANG
A Night to Remember	SHALAMAR
Best of My Love	EMOTIONS
I Will Survive	GLORIA GAYNOR
I Shoulda Loved Ya	NARADA MICHAEL WALDEN
You Gave Me Love	CROWN HEIGHTS AFFAIR
Strut Your Funky Stuff	FRANTIQUE
Feel So Real	STEVE ARRINGTON
Walking On Sunshine	ROCKERS REVENGE w/ DONNIE CALVIN
Love Come Down	EVELYN KING
You Can't Hide (Your Love From Me)	DAVID JOSEPH
Funkytown	LIPPS INC.
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It's a Disco Night (Rock Don't Stop)	ISLEY BROTHERS
I Feel for You	CHAKA KHAN

Country music dance clubs across the US continue to attract diehard fans and newcomers alike. Among many outstanding country dance compilation series, one stands out that has stood the test of time. ***TOE THE LINE 2—THE NEXT STEP*** has long been a favorite of country dance instructors and DJs alike. Besides rare extended versions, this compilation also includes dance instructions—always a plus for the interactive DJ.

Honky Tonkin's What I Do Best	MARTY STUART & RANDY TRAVIS
Every Time I Get Around You	DAVID LEE MURPHY
Swing City (Extended Dance Version)	ROGER BROWN & SWING CITY
Wrong Place, Wrong Time	MARK CHESNUTT
Every Cowboy's Dream	RHETT AKINS
Missing You	MAVERICKS
An Out of Control Raging Fire	TRACY BYRD w/ DAWN SEARS
Tangled Up In Texas (Dance Mix)	FRAZIER RIVER
Where the Sidewalk Ends	GEORGE STRAIT
A Little More Love	VINCE GILL
Texas Is Bigger Than It Used to Be	MARK CHESNUTT
Hillbilly Rock	MARTY STUART
Honky Tonk Dancing Machine	TRACY BYRD
Guitar Town	STEVE EARLE
South Side of Dixie	VINCE GILL

I Brake for Brunettes	RHETT AKINS
Highways and Heartaches	JOE ELY
Walk On	JANEEN WITHERS
Don't Be Cruel (To A Heart That's True)	MARTY STUART
Lovebug	GEORGE STRAIT
Rose of Memphis	RODNEY CROWELL
Love On the Loose, Heart On the Run	McBRIDE AND THE RIDE
Holdin' Heaven (Club Mix)	TRACY BYRD
One Dance with You	VINCE GILL
Tempted	MARTY STUART
Strut Your Stuff	DAVE SHERIFF
If I Ain't Got You	TRISHA YEARWOOD
Children	MAVERICKS
Hard Lovin' Woman	MARK COLLIE
You Better Think Twice	VINCE GILL
Honky Tonk Twist	SCOOTER LEE
What They're Talkin' About	RHETT AKINS
Blame It On Texas	MARK CHESNUTT
Hillbilly Highway	STEVE EARLE
Western Woman	ROGER BROWN & SWING CITY
Big Love (Master Edit)	TRACY BYRD
Rocky Top (Championship Mix)	OSBORNE BROTHERS

Stay Tuned...

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Extra MUSIC NEWS

The Skilz to Freak You Out

The first full-length CD from DJ Skilz, ***Scratch Freak, Volume 1***, provides a phat selection of the styles this scratch/hip-hop/club spinner par excellence can lay down. Throughout the disc, Skilz deftly combines his impeccably precise scratching with intriguing loops and rich, interesting sample pads. He shows off his manual dexterity on the turntables, while at the same time demonstrating a truly musical ear in the way each track is constructed. On just about every track, sections flow easily between percussive scratching that works seamlessly with the underlying drum loops, and freaky manipulation of vocal samples, ("...welcome to my lair").

My favorite track comes right at the beginning. "Halo Scratch Power" places the scratching in a dark, gothic atmosphere generated by a Gregorian chant background. This track reveals the high level of the album's overall production right up front. Another track's success provides further proof of the top-notch production values: "War On Video Games" recently landed in the top 5 downloads at Turntable Radio (www.turntableradio.com).

There are samples here for just about everybody: hard rock on "Jam Out," funky reggae on "Reggae Scratch Jam," chilled out beats on "Something Incredible," and the list goes on and on. This disc is much more than just a demo of this DJ's skills—it is a truly enjoyable music listening experience. Check out **www.djskilz.com** for ordering information. – *D. P. Walsh*

For the Record

At first glance, you might think, as I did, "A book of rap lyrics? What's the point?" After all, the essence of rap is not something that lends itself to being captured on a static page. It is the energy of recorded and live rap that makes it so appealing to its audiences. But upon closer examination, the book, ***Hip-Hop & Rap: Complete Lyrics for 175 Songs*** (Hal Leonard, 2003), turns out to be a valuable tool for understanding this phenomenon.

The songs themselves are well laid out. For lovers of rap, this is a volume that will help fill in the gaps in figuring out many hard-to-understand passages. Revealing the rawness of most rap in black and white on the page, this is also a book that most young listeners would not want their parents to get their hands on. For Mobile DJs, it provides the details on a lot of the classic hip-hop tracks that continue to be requested, along with some newer favorites.

Extra features make the book a good reference tool. The introduction by Spence D. provides a concise history of rap, sorting out the different movements and genres, like Old School, gangsta, etc. Indexes by artist and especially by genre could help an uninformed DJ quickly get up to speed on the differences between styles that are so important to the audiences.

While sitting by the fire reading poetry in the urban vernacular might not be everyone's idea of a relaxing evening, *Hip-Hop & Rap* is still a collection of words that, like it or not, have deeply impacted popular culture, and will continue to shape the future of pop music. For more info, go to **www.halleonard.com**. – *D. P. Walsh*

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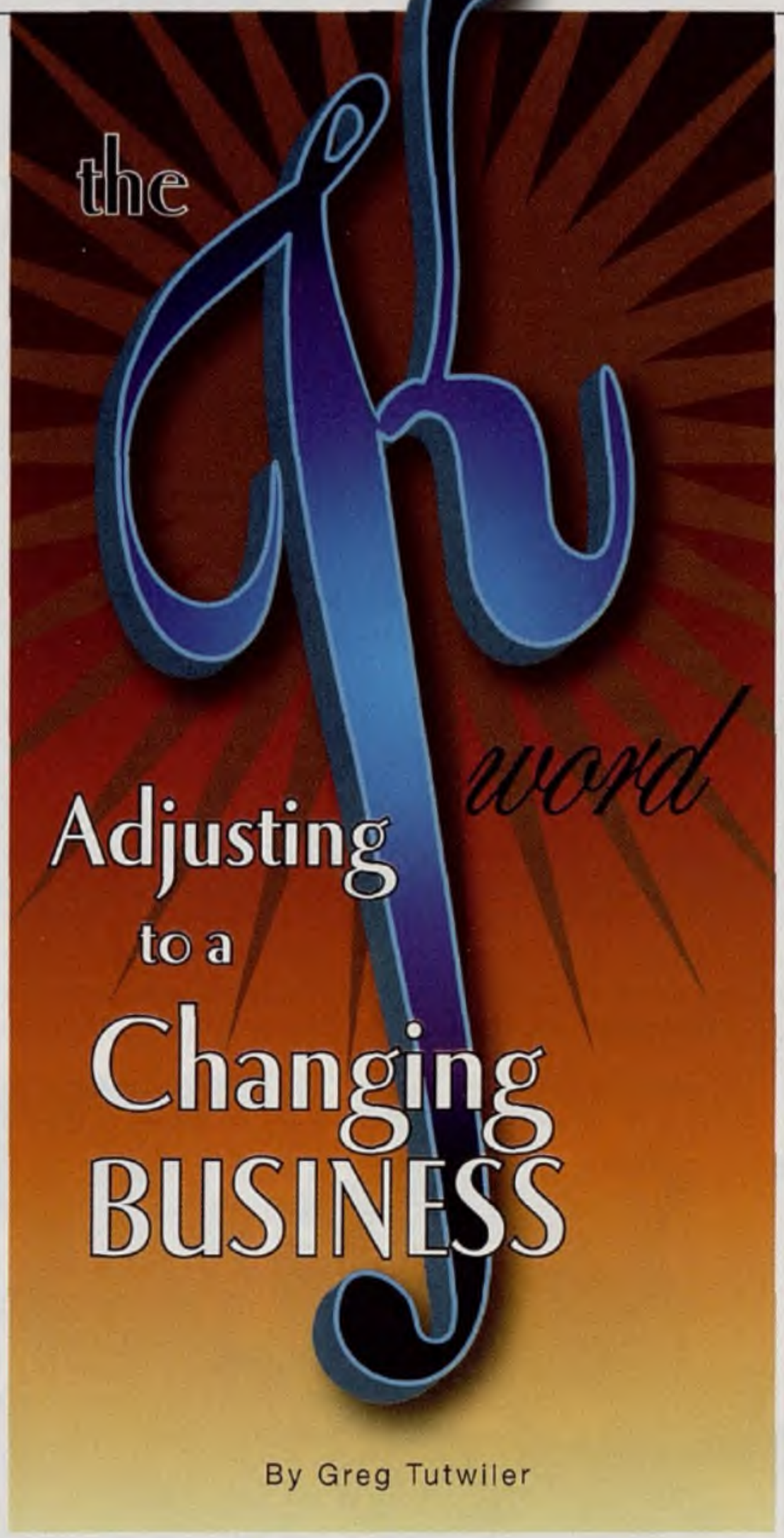

Oh, that beloved K-word. It's almost taboo to say it sometimes. What in the world is going on in the karaoke industry? I get calls and e-mails from frustrated jocks who say they are losing gigs to mom-and-pop outfits who are undercutting their prices by $50 or $100 a night. Others say the economy is killing the bar business. One KJ claimed to have lost over 50% of his business due to venues closing or canceling his shows. And while I was attending the NAMM show this past January, it was clear that most professional audio folks I encountered were not particularly fond of the K-word. Several karaoke software manufacturers have even modified their packaging to minimize the word karaoke in favor of expressions like "singing tracks" or "performance tracks."

Homemade Junkie

The karaoke crisis has multiple sides. First, because most people's first experience with karaoke has been in seedy, dark, smoky bar rooms, that's the image that gets conjured up when karaoke enters any conversation. And granted, that's where karaoke got its start in this country back in the early eighties. But so much has changed since then. A walk through a Wal-Mart, Target, Toys"R"Us, or any other major audio/music retailer will reveal whole departments dedicated just to karaoke. The national karaoke hardware manufacturer, Singing Machine, reported sales of over one million units last Christmas. How many of those karaoke machines do you think ended up on stage in a bar somewhere? Okay, maybe a few. But my point is that karaoke has moved from the bar scene to the home basement. Pioneering karaoke singers from the eighties now have families who enjoy singing as home entertainment.

You Button-Pusher You

Another part of the problem is that audiences want more than just a bland show run by some button pusher. KJ stands for karaoke jockey, which is a modification of the acronym DJ, or disc jockey; simply put, someone who spins discs. But simply spinning karaoke discs doesn't cut it anymore—if it ever did.

KJs are hosts. We're the entertainment directors, if you will. We're in charge of the show. On any given night I'll have eight to twenty singers in rotation, but also an additional 75 to 125 guests in the clubs where I host shows. That means less than 20% of the audience is there to sing. The rest of the folks are there to party, socialize, and simply have a good time. If the rotation is full of slow songs or bad singers, you can bet the crowd won't stick around all night. It's up to us as the hosts to make sure that the night's entertainment comes off in the most enjoyable way possible for the lounge patrons. And that can be done without offending a mediocre singer or cheating anyone out of a turn on stage. As the entertainment director, you certainly have the right to juggle the rotation a bit to get the most out of your entertainment.

Life's a Stage

With *American Idol* well into its record-breaking third season, and shows like *Star Search* still gaining popularity, the desire to feel like a star is more popular than ever. But a five-minute stint in a dimly lit pub corner, singing through a second rate sound system and a $20 microphone, is not fun anymore. You've got to give them more if you want to keep up with the Joneses. I often get comments about the quality of our sound from the singers at our shows. We try to make every singer sound the best they can by mixing each one individually. We use all professional-grade audio equipment. You have to. A singer might not know what a Shure SM58 microphone is, but they know it sounds better than the plastic Radio Shack mic they got with their karaoke machine last Christmas. Remember, you get out of a sound system what you put into it. We're not in an industry where we can get away with cheap stuff anymore. The quality of your shows and the entertainment value you provide are crucial to the longevity of your business.

Semantic Substitute

And if the word "karaoke" is creating issues for you, consider using something else, such as "backing tracks," "performance tracks," "accompaniment tracks," etc. It's

Simply spinning karaoke discs doesn't cut it anymore - if it ever did.

worth noting that many entertainers are out there making a living—even pretty good money—by performing to "backing tracks." They're called "track singers."

Take advantage of today's technology and the efforts of those who've gone before. Forget about mom and pop. Take one look at eBay and you can find many of those mom and pop outfits now for sale. You're the true professional. Dress up, put up some new stage lights, get out from behind the table...and be the host. Let your singers help you put on the show. Think *Star Search*. Think *American Idol*. Give them a taste of the star experience. Give them a show that will keep them coming back for more.•

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Saturday Night Steak Out

Let me tell you about the "night from hell" I had last summer. My company has three parts: wedding and party DJs, live sound and lighting and nightclub event management. I handle the last area.

One of the clubs that I run entertainment for is a sports pub and grill. I received a call from the owner asking if I would act as the bar manager on a certain Saturday night—so he could ride in a new limo to a Sacramento Kings game with the owners of our local Budweiser distributor. Reluctantly, I agreed. I showed up just in time to see them all off in a brand new stretch Hummer limo (argh...the jerks).

The night started off well. At 7:00 PM, the band I had hired showed up on time and proceeded to do a great show. My DJ showed up at 10:00 PM, and he had a packed house. The only problem was that one of the bouncers didn't show up, so there I was, working the door, taking IDs. I think I am a pretty good DJ—but knowing if an ID is real or fake is not part of my usual repertoire.

Around midnight, our local police showed up and did a walk-through. I was worried. I could just see the place getting closed down, and it being my fault. What if I had accidentally let in a minor? What if a brawl broke out? What if we were over capacity? After checking the place out, the police said there were too many people inside, but all we had to do was not to let anyone else in for a while. Otherwise, everything looked fine. What a relief!

Everything turned out fine. The owner returned in a good mood. At about 3:00 AM, I loaded up my van and locked up to go home. I had gotten through the evening with no major problems. Or so I thought.

I live about 30 minutes from the club and the drive home is through the country. About halfway home, I got pulled over. The officer thought maybe I had been drinking, although I explained that I had not. An hour later, after walking in a straight line and saying the alphabet forward and backward twice, he let me go.

Back on my way again, I was about two miles from home when I came around a bend and—

WHAM! I hit something in the road, lost control, crunched through a telephone pole, then a fence, and finally came to a halt. DJ equipment rammed into the back of my seat and, on the passenger side, smashed into the dashboard. Then I realized the van was filled with a blazing red light. Thinking it was fire, I jumped out and started running.

The good news was that I was not hurt and the bright light was only a road flare that had gone off in the back of the van. The bad news was that my van was totaled.

You'll never guess what I hit...It was a very large cow. After the police showed up and the van was towed, I finally got home at about 7:00 AM. In the end, it turned out to be a very bad night.

My insurance paid for a new van. The owner of the cow was very sorry that it had gotten out and caused so much trouble. As a matter of fact, he felt so bad that he had the cow carved into steaks and delivered them to my house. •

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